

Letter to Washington Post - Dec. 8, 2020

## **Covid-19 Relief Bill Should Do More for Low-wage Workers**

With due respect to their bipartisan efforts, Sens. Mark Warner and Susan Collins' statement in a [Dec. 8 Post op-ed](#) that their compromise "would help Americans at least get through the next four months" is dead wrong.

Very little in the Covid-19 relief package would help low-income Americans make it even through one month. What's needed most is rent relief and money to cover food and utility bills. Yet no direct payments to low-income individuals similar to the checks issued under the [CARES Act](#) in the spring are to be found. The bipartisan proposal mainly would benefit interests with access to Congress: businesses (via cheap or free money plus a liability shield), non-profits/associations/churches, state governments, and professional classes including doctors, lawyers, and accountants.

The D.C. government's decision to send [\\$1,200 checks](#) to people among the hardest hit – also reported by the Post – sets a good example for both states and the federal government. Congressional leaders, many perched in the nation's wealthiest strata, need to understand that half of the U.S. workforce earns [low wages](#) or is [out of a job](#). Viewed from the bottom up, the United States is becoming a much more impoverished nation.

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**Possible conflicts of interest: Study/analyze impacts of economic inequality and advocate for inclusion of people at the bottom. No outside funding including from charities or business interests.**

**Letter contains links to these articles and government web sites:**

[Opinion | Mark R. Warner and Susan Collins: We've worked hard to achieve a covid-19 compromise package. We can't afford inaction. - The Washington Post](#)

[D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser announces stimulus, coronavirus restrictions on sports - The Washington Post](#)

<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares/assistance-for-american-workers-and-families>

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/meet-the-low-wage-workforce/>

<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf>