

## Bailout People, Not Polluters.

Deaths from COVID-19 have just surpassed 500,000. Expanded unemployment benefits for nearly 4 million Americans end in mid-March, and the total could exceed 11 million by the end of the month. Workers on the frontlines of the crisis are still without PPE equipment and hazard pay. Americans are still waiting for the lion's-share of the \$2,000 checks Congress, President Trump, and President Biden all promised them.

Millions of Americans are waiting for Congress to take action, and pass President Biden's first and biggest priority: Pandemic relief. But one constituency has already had plenty of help: Trump's cronies in the fossil fuel industry. An [analysis by BailoutWatch, Public Citizen, and Friends of the Earth reveals](#) **the fossil fuel industry received between \$10.4 billion and \$15.2 billion in direct economic relief from federal efforts under President Donald Trump during the pandemic.**

## A disturbing betrayal

With so much at stake, and so much taxpayer money already given to the fossil fuel industry, it was especially disappointing to see a number of amendments to the President's COVID relief package offered during the Senate Vote-a-rama in early February that extended and expanded the so-called Big Oil Bailout. Perhaps nothing was more disappointing than seeing Democratic Senators betray their party, President, constituents and common sense by supporting these amendments:

- [Braun #833](#) – [against] Fracking ban
- [Daines #678](#) – [for] Keystone XL
- [Capito #655](#) – [for] Dirty Water Rule

Those amendments were stripped by Leader Schumer's final substitute amendment, and the Senate Parliamentarian has indicated she will be more strict at preventing non-germane amendments this month.

However, since the House passed a clean COVID relief bill, **we are calling on Senators, especially those who caucus with the President's party, to refrain from offering or supporting any amendments that will redirect taxpayer money from pandemic relief to polluter support.**

## Real solutions exist

Thankfully, progressive leaders in Congress like Representative Ilhan Omar and Senator Bernie Sanders are fighting back. Last year, our champions introduced the End Polluter Welfare Act, or EPWA, to repeal existing subsidies and stop the ongoing fossil fuel bailout ([H.R.7781](#) / [S.4887](#)).

President Biden has further [called on Congress to end \\$40 billion in taxpayer subsidies for fossil fuels](#), and Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry has [announced an end to international fossil fuel financing](#).

**These are the appropriate venues for debating taxpayer support for fossil fuels** - and how to end the multi-billion dollar big-oil bailout President Trump created through last year's COVID relief bills. **President Biden's American Rescue Plan is not.**

## Next Steps

People need support, not polluters. As the Senate again considers President Biden's \$1.9 Trillion American Rescue Plan, it is essential for all Senators to resist the temptation and pressure to put polluting industries and campaign contributors ahead of the needs of the American people.

We are especially sure that no Democrat who supports President Biden and his ambitious goals on climate change and building back better will be willing to support continuing Trump's legacy by supporting polluters.

Thank you for your service and swift action to address the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. We'll be watching your votes, and are happy to be in contact with your office regarding any details or questions.