

## *Tin Cập Nhật Tổng Hợp về Stimulus Package*

### **N** *Stimulus Bill Tax Reliefs Draw Fire Due to Smaller Second Check*

*Brendan Cole - Newsweek*

*The \$900 billion stimulus package passed by Congress is facing criticism for some of the tax breaks it offers—and for not giving Americans enough cash in their pockets.*



*Cheriss May/Getty Images The US Capitol on December 21, 2020 before lawmakers voted to pass a \$900 billion coronavirus relief bill. There has been criticism that the direct payments are not big enough.*

*The legislation, which **includes \$600 direct payments** to eligible adults, has been described as an "important first step" by Democratic party leaders, signaling a push for further relief in the new year.*

*But Josh Hawley, a Republican senator from Missouri, who had teamed up with Vermont Senator **Bernie Sanders** to push for payments of **\$1,200 for each adult**, took a swipe at some of the tax breaks in the bill and said that for ordinary Americans, the "assistance is not nearly enough."*

*He tweeted: "Mark my words, there will be hundreds of BILLIONS spent on special interests, banks and government."*

*In a follow-up tweet, he shared a message from journalist Lee Fang, which outlined how tax breaks would be offered to racehorse owners.*

*"And here comes the lists of corporate & government giveaways—but remember, negotiators said we couldn't give working people a single penny more," Hawley wrote.*

*Oregon Senator Ron Wyden, the ranking Democrat on the Senate finance committee, said on Monday that a draft of the bill showed how corporations would be able to write off the cost of business meals from their tax bills.*

*President Donald Trump had pushed for the deduction, which critics call the "three-martini lunch," to boost the ailing hospitality industry.*

*"Republicans are nickel-and-diming benefits for jobless workers, while at the same time pushing for tax breaks for three-martini power lunches. It's unconscionable," Wyden said in a statement to The Washington Post.*

*Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) also took a swipe at the corporate tax breaks, as well as the provision of \$1.4 billion for President's Trump's border wall.*

*"This is what the American people will feel tonight: we have billions of your tax dollars for corporate meal expenses and a racist border wall—but only scraps for those struggling to pay for food, rent, and healthcare," she tweeted.*

*And here comes the lists of corporate & government giveaways - but remember, negotiators said we couldn't give working people a single penny more*  
<https://t.co/iZEx2K1iiW>

*— Josh Hawley (@HawleyMO) December 21, 2020*

*This is what the American people will feel tonight: "we have billions of your tax dollars for corporate meal expenses and a racist border wall—but only scraps for those struggling to pay for food, rent, and healthcare."*  
*It's disgraceful.*

*— Rashida Tlaib (@RashidaTlaib) December 22, 2020*

*"Folks won't be able to survive with this bill as is. COVID-19 will force an additional 8 million people into poverty."*

*Noah Pransky, a reporter for NBC LX, tweeted about other tax reliefs "hidden away" in the 5,593-page stimulus bill "that no Senator is going to read: tax breaks for NASCAR tracks! As well as for beer brewers, wine makers and liquor distillers - some of the biggest pandemic winners, judging by their stock prices."*

*Meanwhile, Rep. Ken Buck (R-CO) tweeted his unhappiness that the bill would authorize a Smithsonian Women's History Museum and the National Museum of the American Latino.*

*"I didn't know the American people desperately needed two new Smithsonian museums to get through this pandemic," he wrote.*

*Tlaib is a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, whose chair Pramila Jayapa (D-WA) said the bill did not go far enough in its direct payments and that "the dangers of going too small far outweigh the risk of going too big."*

*"In the coming months, Congress must pass a comprehensive package that meets the scale of the crisis, prevents this economic crisis from worsening and brings real, substantial relief to the millions of individuals and families living on the brink," she added, according to political website The Hill.*

*Another member of the progressive caucus, Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), compared the package with the price tag of the National Defense Authorization Act agreed last week and said the GOP-led Senate had "not prioritized the American people."*

*"If they can approve a \$740 billion NDAA package then we should be providing direct relief to the American people and that is in the form of cash recurring payments. At this point they are not even stimulus payments, they are survival checks," she told MSNBC.*

*The House of Representatives voted 359-53 for the bill, with two Democrats, 50 Republicans and the Libertarian Rep. Justin Amash opposing it. Senators voted 92-6 in favor of passing the package.*

## ***Politics Stimulus Package Economy***

*James Walker - US*

*Lawmakers were only given a few hours to scrutinize the 5,593-page COVID-19 stimulus bill passed by Congress on Monday night, sparking complaints from Republicans and Democrats who voted for and against the second relief package.*

*The text of the bill was released at about 2 p.m. ET on Monday afternoon and lawmakers in the House and Senate [passed the legislation](#) shortly before midnight the same day.*

*Reacting to the push to vote quickly on legislation packed with various stimulus measures—including direct payments, federal relief funds and tax deductions—several lawmakers said they didn't have the time to check the proposals properly.*

*"Members of Congress have not read this bill. It's over 5000 pages, arrived at 2pm today, and we are told to expect a vote on it in 2 hours," tweeted Rep. [Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez](#) (D-NY). "This isn't governance. It's hostage-taking."*

*Republican Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky also railed against the time lawmakers had been given, wrongly claiming that all Democrats had voted to scrap a rule giving representatives 72 hours to read the legislation.*

*Five Democrats opposed the last-minute rush, including Ocasio-Cortez—who later voted in favor of the relief—and Reps. [Tulsi Gabbard](#) of Hawaii and [Ilhan Omar](#) of Minnesota.*



*Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) said the rush to pass the second COVID-19 relief bill was akin to "hostage taking." TOM WILLIAMS-POOL/GETTY IMAGES*

*Gabbard [voted against](#) the bill and released a video to explain her decision, saying: "There is no way that anybody in Congress had the opportunity or the time to go through and read this bill to know exactly what was in it."*

*"I've been here long enough to see how provisions are snuck into these bills, literally in the dark of night, without any announcement, without telling anyone what is in it, and then rushed through in the manner that we have just seen."*

*House Republicans who voted against the bill raised similar complaints.*

*Rep. John Rose of Tennessee said in a statement: "The House was forced to vote on a multi-trillion-dollar 5,600-page backroom deal that was given to members of Congress just hours before. I refuse to reward bad behavior with a 'yes' vote and that is especially true on a bill such as this that few people, most importantly my constituents, know what is actually in it."*

*Rep. Warren Davidson (R-OH) called on other representatives to vote no on the "hastily prepared" bill as he railed against "broken" processes on Capitol Hill.*

*After the bill passed, Rep. Andy Biggs (R-AZ) tweeted: "After days of backroom negotiations & only a handful of hours to read the 6,000-page legislation, the House passed the omnibus & COVID-19 spending bill tonight. Congress continues to fail the American people & bankrupt our grandchildren's future."*

*Local television station CBS17 reported that Reps. Jody Hice (R-GA) and Ralph Norman (R-SC) signed a letter to President [Donald Trump](#) urging him to veto the bill as they complained about the "closed-door" negotiations.*

*In the upper chamber, Sen. [Ted Cruz](#) (R-TX) tweeted that it was "absurd" to expect lawmakers to vote on a \$900 billion stimulus bill "nobody has had time to read," as he signaled a rare agreement with Ocasio-Cortez.*

*"Legislation like this needs to be voted on, it needs to be understood at the time it's voted on," Sen. Mike Lee of Utah added in a video statement. "Members need to have the chance to not only read it and understand it, but vet it with their constituents and offer up improvements."*

*The second COVID-19 relief bill—which provides [\\$600 stimulus checks](#) and federal rental assistance among several other bailout measures—passed both chambers by large majorities last night.*

*House lawmakers voted 359-53 in favor, with only two Democratic representatives defecting on the measures. The Senate voted 92-6 in support of the relief as a handful of Republicans broke ranks with party leadership.*

## ***Bernie Sander Stimulus Package***

*Jacob Jarvis - Politics*

*Sen. [Bernie Sanders](#) (I-VT) has vowed to push for more COVID-19 relief in January, including a third round of stimulus checks, after insisting [the latest agreement](#) does "not go anywhere near far enough."*

*The fresh package includes \$600 direct payments, but Sanders had pushed for another round of \$1,200 checks.*

*"While including these payments ultimately improved this bill, given the enormous economic desperation that so many working families across this country are now experiencing, there is no question but that this legislation did not go far enough," [he said in a statement](#).*

*"When President-elect Biden assumes office next month and when the Senate comes back into session in January, I will immediately begin fighting for another relief bill to help America's working families—including another round of direct payments and more relief for the unemployed, the hungry, the uninsured and those who owe back rent and are behind on mortgage payments."*

*Sanders had [expressed his view that the \\$900 billion stimulus deal was too small](#) before Congress voted.*

*"In this unprecedented crisis, it is imperative that we do everything we can to protect the working families of our country, the elderly, the children and the poor," his statement concluded.*



## **Sanders Statement on Passage of COVID-19 Relief Package**

WASHINGTON, December 21 — Upon the Senate's passage of the \$908-billion COVID-19 spending package, Sen. Sanders (I-Vt.) issued the following statement:

"Tonight, Congress passed a \$908-billion COVID-19 relief bill that extends unemployment benefits through the early spring, and provides support for small businesses, schools, healthcare, nutrition, rental assistance, child care, broadband, the Postal Service, as well as funding to help distribute vaccines.

"During the last several weeks, I have been working very hard, along with Republican Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri, to provide direct payments to working families throughout the country. Our goal was to replicate what was in the CARES bill of March, which was \$1200 for every working-class adult and \$500 for each child. While we did not get as much as we wanted, because of opposition from the Republican leadership and too many Democrats, the bill does include a \$600 direct payment for every working-class American earning less than \$75,000 a year, and a \$1,200 direct payment for couples making less than \$150,000 a year, plus \$600 for each child. That means that the average family of four will receive a direct payment of \$2400.

"While including these direct payments ultimately improved this bill, given the enormous economic desperation that so many working families across this country are now experiencing, there is no question but that this legislation did not go anywhere near far enough.

"When President-Elect Biden assumes office next month and when the Senate comes back into session in January, I will immediately begin fighting for another relief bill to help America's working families—including another round of direct payments and more relief for the unemployed, the hungry, the uninsured and those who owe back rent and are behind on their mortgage payments. In this unprecedented crisis, it is imperative that we do everything we can to protect the working families of our country, the elderly, the children and the poor."

*He and Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO) had been major advocates in the Senate for [larger payments](#).*

*Asked about the checks on CNN, Sanders said: "I wanted \$1,200. We ended up with \$600, which for a family of four, the average family of four, will be \$2,400.*

*"Will that help? Yes, it will. Is it enough? No, it is not."*

*He added: "This is a step forward, it is better than nothing, but it is nowhere near, in my view, where it should be going."*

The Vermont senator's comments come as [Democrat lawmakers also voiced their desire to push for more stimulus](#) next year, welcoming the deal but suggesting more action would be needed down the line.

A joint statement from House Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#) (D-CA) and Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#) (D-NY), released after Congressional leaders agreed the deal, said: "The emergency relief in this agreement, the second largest in history only to the CARES Act, is an important first step that Democrats look forward to building on under the new Biden-Harris Administration to meet the remaining needs of the American people during this historic health and economic crisis."

Newsweek has contacted Sanders' office for further comment.



*S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) wears a face mask while leaving the U.S. Capitol on December 11. He has described the latest stimulus package as a step forward, but not enough. STEFANI REYNOLDS/GETTY IMAGES*

### ***Tulsi Gabbard Calls \$600 Stimulus Check a 'Slap in the Face' to Americans***

*Jeffery Martin - US News*

Democratic Hawaii Representative [Tulsi Gabbard](#) criticized the COVID-19 economic stimulus bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on Monday, calling the amount of direct assistance payments a "slap in the face."

After months of hammering out details, the U.S. Congress passed an economic relief bill on Monday night with a price tag of roughly \$900 billion. The bill provides for direct payments of \$600 to be made to all eligible Americans.

*Gabbard and other lawmakers have said the amount of money in those payments won't be enough.*

*"\$600 is a slap in the face to every American struggling due to the pandemic," Gabbard tweeted. "You deserve better."*

*"I voted against the 5,593-page spending bill that gave billions to corporate interests, the military-industrial complex & other countries, leaving crumbs for you who need help most," Gabbard added.*

*"This bill dished out hundreds of billions of dollars going toward special interests, going toward the military-industrial complex, going towards foreign countries meanwhile saying, here's what's left for you. You get 600 bucks," Gabbard said in a video embedded within the tweet.*

*"I'll tell you in Hawaii, that in most cases won't even cover 25 percent of your rent. It is an insult and a slap in the face to every single American in this country who is struggling because of this, this COVID pandemic, who is concerned about not being able to pay the rent, about eviction, about whether you'll have enough to buy groceries or medicine for yourself or your loved ones."*

*"This bill is a representation of the screwed-up priorities of Washington," Gabbard continued.*

*"They should be fighting for you and making sure that you, the American people, come first. This bill did not do that."*



*Former Democratic presidential candidate Representative Tulsi Gabbard said Monday the \$600 checks allocated to Americans in a proposed economic stimulus bill were a "slap in the face."BILL PUGLIANO/GETTY*

*Gabbard, who is retiring at the end of her term, also said Monday that she would not be vaccinated against COVID-19 until American senior citizens have received the vaccine.*

*After its Monday passage in the House, the bill was sent to the U.S. Senate for a late-night vote, [where it passed](#) with a vote of 91-7. The legislation will be sent to President [Donald Trump](#) for his approval.*

*Some other lawmakers also decried the direct assistance payments as being scant. In a Sunday floor speech, Missouri Senator Josh Hawley said the \$600 checks were "hardly adequate and we should not pretend otherwise."*

*Hawley forced a vote on Sunday to raise the amount of the direct assistance to payments to \$1,200, the amount of direct payments allocated after the CARES Act passed in March, but that attempt failed.*

*Contingent upon the legislation being signed into law, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the \$600 payments could start being sent out before the end of December.*

*In an interview Monday with CNBC, Mnuchin said the money would constitute "much need relief just in time for the holidays."*

*"I think this will take us through the recovery," Mnuchin added.*

*President-elect [Joe Biden](#) said Sunday that while the legislation was a good start, more work needed to be done.*

*"Immediately, starting in the new year, Congress will need to get to work on support for our COVID-19 plan, for support to struggling families, and investments in jobs and economic recovery," Biden said in a statement. "There will be no time to waste."*

*Newsweek reached out to Biden's transition team for further comment.*

## ***5 Items in the New Coronavirus Stimulus Bill Not Specifically Tied to Economic Relief***

*[Meghan Roos](#) - US News*

*Hundreds of millions of dollars included in the new coronavirus relief package expected to be signed into law this week are aimed at addressing societal problems exacerbated by the pandemic.*

*Leaders in the Senate and House of Representatives announced on Sunday that they came to an agreement on a new economic stimulus package worth about \$900 billion aimed at providing relief for Americans impacted by the pandemic.*

*The stimulus bill is part of a \$1.4 trillion omnibus 2021 spending package and marks the first time both chambers of Congress agreed upon a coronavirus relief package*

since President [Donald Trump](#) signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act into law in March.

Since the CARES Act, the House led by Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#) passed two versions of the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act, known as the [HEROES Act](#), though the legislation never made it through the Senate.

With new COVID-19 cases on the rise across the country and frustrations mounting about the lack of federal assistance for American workers, legislators in Washington, D.C., voiced determination to pass a new relief package before the end of this year.

During a [news conference on Sunday](#), Pelosi highlighted childcare support, nutrition assistance and other Democratic victories included in the bill while acknowledging that she and other members within the Democratic Party did not believe the current bill goes far enough.

"We consider this a first step and that, again, more needs to be done," Pelosi said. "We're so excited that that will be happening under the Biden-Harris administration, about 700 hours from now."

On Monday, Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) told Fox News' *The Daily Briefing* that the new relief package was "directly targeted at exactly what the country needs right now." McConnell also kept the door open for additional pandemic relief packages under President-elect [Joe Biden](#)'s incoming administration.

The new relief package includes one-time direct payments of \$600 to qualifying Americans, as well as expanded unemployment benefits for those out of work due to the pandemic.

In addition to providing direct financial aid for Americans in need, the relief package provides funding to support COVID-19 vaccine distribution and tackles several problems Americans face every day that the pandemic worsened.

The House Appropriations Committee's communications director, Evan Hollander, addressed some of those funding items in a statement shared with *Newsweek*.

"The coronavirus pandemic has exposed holes in our nation's social safety net and threatens to widen the digital divide," Hollander said. "In crafting emergency coronavirus relief legislation, House Democrats have secured important funding to address surging mental health and substance abuse crises and help protect vulnerable seniors. To ensure that America's kids and families have access to the broadband internet that is essential in the 21st century, Democrats have also added funding to support broadband connectivity."

Here are five of the funding items included in the bill that do not directly stimulate the economy but are intended to address struggles compounded by the pandemic that some Americans face every day.



*Congressional leaders agreed upon a new COVID-19 relief package on Sunday and are expected to officially pass the package on Monday. In the photo above, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) listens as Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) speaks during a press conference on Capitol Hill on December 20, 2020 in Washington, D.C. TASOS KATOPODIS/GETTY*

#### ***\$4.25 Billion for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Programs***

*Legislators set aside \$1.65 billion each for the Substance Abuse and Prevention Treatment and the Mental Health Services block grants. They designated another \$600 million for certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics and \$50 million for suicide prevention programs. Some of the funding was also allocated for mental health and trauma support among children.*

*Lawmakers' decision to include funding for mental health and substance abuse programs is likely in response to the impact the pandemic has had on the American public. According to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report published in August, the percentages of Americans struggling with depression, anxiety and substance abuse have increased in response to pandemic-inspired stay-at-home orders and social distancing requirements.*

#### ***\$100 Million to Combat Elder Abuse and Neglect***

*The money designated to combat elder abuse and neglect represents [half of the amount](#) included in the HEROES 2.0 proposal the House passed in October. While HEROES 2.0 specified how its \$200 million was to be spent on preventing, investigating and prosecuting elder abuse, the description for the elder abuse funding in this new bill is brief and simply says the money is intended to "address abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly, including adult protective service and long-term care ombudsman activities."*

#### ***\$400 Million for Dairy Donation Program***

*Milk processing companies will be reimbursed when they convert their milk products into other dairy products and donate them to food banks and other nonprofit nutrition organizations under this portion of the relief package.*

*The U.S. Department of Agriculture already has a Milk Donation Reimbursement Program, which legislators acknowledged in allocating money for this new dairy program. According to the bill, the milk processing companies that participate are responsible for negotiating their donations with nonprofit organizations, after which the Department of Agriculture will reimburse them for the cost of the milk used.*

### ***\$60 Million for Meat and Poultry Facility Upgrades***

*Though many meat and poultry processing facilities in the U.S. have struggled through COVID-19 outbreaks among employees, this portion of the spending bill appears to be focused more on the supply chain side of the meat processing industry.*

*The goal of the facility upgrades funded under this provision are intended to "help [facilities] move to Federal inspection and be able to sell their products across state lines," according to a summary of the bill written by the Democratic Staff of the House Committee on Appropriations.*

### ***\$1.3 Billion for Broadband Connectivity Grants***

*As many American workers and school-aged children shifted to virtual working and learning environments this year, internet reliability and access became a point of concern for legislators representing communities without dependable broadband connections.*

*In addition to providing billions in aid to expand broadband access and improve telehealth programs, the relief package sets aside \$1 billion for a grant program aimed at expanding broadband accessibility on tribal land across the country.*

*"The grants would be directed to tribal governments to be used not only for broadband deployment on tribal lands, but also telehealth, distance learning, broadband affordability, and digital inclusion," according to the bill.*

*Another \$300 million is included in this portion of the bill to provide grants for expanding broadband access in rural areas and other locations without dependable connections. States and local governments will negotiate the grants with broadband companies based on which are able to provide access to a greater number of individuals, the bill states.*