

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY

 **CHAIRMAN** *Special Committee on Aging*

The American Rescue Plan: Pandemic Relief for Older Americans and People with Disabilities

The public health emergency and its economic fallout have devastated older adults, people with disabilities and their families. Seniors and people with disabilities with underlying health conditions, particularly from communities of color, are [among those most likely](#) to face serious complications, hospitalization and death from COVID-19. Older adults account for [81 percent](#) of all deaths from COVID-19, and people with disabilities are [three times more likely to die](#) from the virus than the general population. The American Rescue Plan provides solutions to quickly and efficiently vaccinate older adults and people with disabilities, protect the health of those most at risk, ease financial suffering and help these Americans return to work.

Vaccinating Older Adults and People with Disabilities Against COVID-19:

- Provides \$20 billion to improve COVID-19 vaccine administration and distribution.
- Consistent with Senator Casey's [S. 440](#), allocates \$460 million for vaccination outreach, education and transportation to appointments and to help reduce social isolation for those restricted to their homes.

Investing in Home and Community-Based Services:

- Drawing from Senator Casey's [S. 151](#), secures nearly \$12.7 billion to expand Medicaid home and community-based services. States may use these funds to recruit and train workers, purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing supplies, offer wage increases and benefits or reduce wait lists among seniors and people with disabilities who wish to receive home-based care.

Saving Lives in Nursing Homes and Protecting Seniors from Abuse:

- Consistent with Senator Casey's [S. 333](#), provides \$500 million for States to operate nursing home strike teams to manage COVID-19 outbreaks and another \$200 million for technical assistance on infection control and vaccinations.
- Allocates \$50 billion for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing efforts as well as to manufacture and procure PPE and \$8 billion for the public health workforce.
- Secures roughly \$286 million to protect seniors from abuse, neglect and exploitation through Adult Protective Services and long-term care ombudsman programs.

Helping Caregivers and their Families:

- Following from Senator Casey's [S. 271](#), strengthens the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, allowing millions of working parents and caregivers to recoup up to half the cost of care—up to \$4,000 for one child or dependent and up to \$8,000 for two or more.
- Creates a new resource center to support organizations that provide assistance to grandfamilies, drawing from Senator Casey's [S. 1660 \(116th\)](#).

Expanding Health Coverage:

- Reduces the cost of premiums for those with health care coverage through the Affordable Care Act's (ACA's) Marketplaces, [particularly for people ages 60 and up](#).
- Increases federal funds to expand Medicaid in the 14 states that have not yet implemented the ACA's Medicaid expansion, potentially covering up to [4.7 million](#).
- Makes COBRA coverage affordable for those who lost employer-based health insurance.

Offering a Financial Lifeline to Unemployed Workers and Retirees:

- Provides low-income and middle-income households with direct payments equal to \$1,400 per-adult as well as an additional \$1,400 per dependent.
- Extends emergency unemployment insurance programs and the \$300 supplement to weekly unemployment benefits through September 6, 2021.
- Prevents surprise tax bills for many workers who received unemployment benefits in 2020 by making the first \$10,200 of unemployment benefits non-taxable for low-income and middle-income households.
- Secures more than \$80 million to fight COVID-19 frauds and scams and to help the federal government monitor fraudulent COVID-19 products perpetrated by con artists.

Putting Healthy Food on the Table:

- Allocates \$775 million for home-delivered and congregate meals to states, territories and tribal organizations, consistent with Senator Casey's [S. 440](#).
- Extends the 15 percent increase in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit levels and provides support to states to implement this change.
- Provides \$25 million for technological improvements to SNAP online purchasing, expanding access for seniors and other at-risk Americans to safely buy food during the pandemic.
- Secures \$37 million to provide non-perishable foods to seniors through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, or senior food box program.

Helping Renters, Saving Homes and Offering Transportation Supports:

- Provides more than \$20 billion in emergency rental assistance to help Americans in need.
- Allocates almost \$10 billion to help homeowners who are struggling to afford their mortgage payments, utility bills and other housing costs.
- Secures \$10 billion in vouchers and community assistance for people who are homeless, at-risk of homelessness or fleeing domestic violence.
- Provides \$50 million for transportation programming planned and designed to meet the needs of seniors and people with disabilities.