



EXPLAINER

CONGRESSIONAL
PROGRESSIVE
CAUCUS CENTER

CPC CENTER'S POLICY AND RESEARCH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE ACTION PRIORITIES

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The Biden Administration has acted swiftly to fulfill a number of campaign promises through the power of the executive. The Administration has also worked alongside Congress in an attempt to enact many other economic, care economy, and climate priorities in a robust reconciliation package. While negotiations are ongoing, the President can immediately sign additional executive orders in the following policy areas that would advance racial equity, combat the climate crisis, lower health care costs, protect immigrant rights, and raise wages for workers. This memorandum sets out several areas ripe for executive action, lists some potential executive orders, and links to critical supporting materials authored by member organizations of the CPC Center's Policy and Research Council. The Policy and Research Council is a convening of national policy and research think tanks and advocacy groups dedicated to delivering policies that build a more just and equitable world.

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

When the global pandemic hit, we saw just how cruel and unfair our healthcare system can be. Everyone deserves quality medical treatment. And all people deserve to be able to make the best personal healthcare decisions for themselves and their families.

The administration has outlined many steps that it can take to improve health outcomes for all Americans. Lowering prescription drug prices by expanding manufacturing capacity and allowing personal drug importation would ensure greater access to the medicines people need. Making COVID-19 vaccines

technologies widely available would improve global vaccine equity and help make the world and America more resilient to emerging COVID strains.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Action: Protect reproductive health;
 - Resource: [Build Repro Back Better: A Year of Opportunity and Crisis](#), Planned Parenthood For America
- Executive Action: Lower drug prices
 - Resource: [How the Next Administration Can Lower Drug Prices](#), Center for American Progress
- Executive Action: Help bring an end to the COVID-19 crisis on a global scale
 - [Global Vaccine Equity](#), CPC Center

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

The gap between the wealthiest Americans and 99 percent of America has continued to grow in recent years. The Biden Administration can pursue several policies that help bridge that gap and address economic disparity. Strengthening overtime pay, closing the gap between CEO and worker pay, and canceling student debt are just some of the steps the administration can take immediately to have a profound impact on people's lives.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Action: Update overtime protections, guaranteeing more take-home pay for millions of workers
 - Resource: [Strengthening Overtime Protections](#) Center for American Progress, Economic Policy Institute, National Employment Law Project
- Executive Action: Federal support for jobs and apprenticeships in communities facing persistently high unemployment
 - Resource: [Request for Information on the Prosperity Gap Submission to the Select Committee on Economic Disparity and Fairness in Growth of the U.S. House of Representatives](#), Center for Economic and Policy Research

- Executive Actions: Hold corporations accountable when they harm workers and limit or end forced arbitration
 - Resource: [Private Courts, Biased Outcomes: The Adverse Impact of Forced Arbitration on People of Color, Women, Low-Income Americans, and Nursing Home Residents](#), Center for Progressive Reform
- Executive Action: Address the growing gap in worker and CEO pay
 - Resource: [IPS Senate testimony on narrowing the gap between CEO and worker pay](#), Institute for Policy Studies
- Executive Action: Make federal investments in affordable, quality childcare
 - Resource: [In Pursuit of an Equitable Start: Leveraging and expanding public funding to support a more equitable recovery for young children, families, and child care workers](#), Policy Link
- Executive Action: Cancel student debt
 - Resource: [Student Debt Cancellation Would Promote an Equitable Recovery without Increasing Inflation](#), Roosevelt Institute

HUMAN RIGHTS-FOCUSED FOREIGN POLICY

The history of U.S. foreign policy is centered on militarism and has done little to address the endless cycle of war. If nothing else, the conflicts raging around the world — from Ukraine to Yemen to Ethiopia — have shown us the value of diplomacy and other nonviolent tools of statecraft. The Biden Administration has a number of actions it can pursue right now that address our most significant external challenges while at the same time advancing a human-rights-based approach to foreign policy.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Action: Channel the U.S. share of Special Drawing Rights to nations impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine
 - Resource: [Congressional Hearing Highlights Need for IMF Policy Change to Support an Equitable Global Recovery](#), Center for Economic and Policy Research
- Executive Action: End U.S. military support and weapons sales that aid the Saudi-led war on Yemen

- Resource: [The Saudi-Led War in Yemen: Frequently Asked Questions](#), Friends Committee on National Legislation
- General Resource: [Interview with Col. Larry Wilkerson and Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies](#)

IMMIGRATION JUSTICE

The Biden Administration can enact a number of executive orders that would create a fair immigration process that treats each person with dignity, provides meaningful opportunities for newcomers to participate equally in our society, become citizens, and make this a country that honors all families.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Action: Support Temporary Designated Status for people seeking to remain in the U.S. until they can safely return to their countries
 - Resource: [ADC & Partner Organizations Call for Lebanon TPS Designation](#), Arab- American Anti-Discrimination Committee
 - Resource: [There Is No Evidence That TPS Designations Increase Irregular Migration to the United States](#), Center for American Progress
 - Resource: [A Demographic Profile of TPS Holders Providing Essential Services During the Coronavirus Crisis](#), Center for American Progress
- Executive Action: End family detention
 - Resource: [From Guards to Guardians: Healthy Community Alternatives to Immigration Detention](#), Children's Defense Fund
- Executive Action: Prevent exploitation and outsourcing under the H-1B and H-2B visa programs
 - Resource: [The Biden administration can stop H-1B visas from fueling outsourcing: Half of the top 30 H-1B employers were outsourcing firms in 2021](#), Economic Policy Institute
 - Resource: [Wages are still too low in H-2B occupations: Updated wage rules could ensure labor standards are protected and migrants are paid fairly](#), Economic Policy Institute
 - Resource: [Claims of labor shortages in H-2B industries don't hold up to scrutiny: President Biden should not expand a flawed temporary work visa program](#), Economic Policy Institute

JUSTICE FOR ALL

We all want the freedom to move through our communities without fearing for our lives or those of our loved ones. But our current criminal justice system doesn't always foster justice or keep our communities safe. The Biden Administration can build upon previous executive orders and realize a new vision of public safety that upholds dignity, safety, and opportunity for all of us, Black, White, or Brown.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Actions: Increase transparency and accountability for police and demilitarize police forces
 - Resource: [The Facts on Pattern-or-Practice Investigations How the U.S. Department of Justice Can Bring About Police Reform and Accountability](#), Center for American Progress
 - Resource: [Violent Crime Rates Declined in 10 Jurisdictions Following Comprehensive Police Reform](#), Center for American Progress
 - Resource: [The Community Responder Model: How Cities Can Send the Right Responders to every 911 Call](#), Center for American Progress
 - Resource: [3 Under-the-Radar Executive Actions for the Biden Administration's Criminal Justice Reform Agenda](#), Center for American Progress
 - Resource: [Civil and Human Rights Progress Report](#), The Leadership Council on Civil and Human Rights

PROTECTING DIRECT CARE ACCESS AND WORKERS

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated and laid bare a tragic and straightforward truth - access to child care and home health care is limited and expensive while care workers are overworked and underpaid. The executive branch can support a better, more secure care economy and support our families by raising wages and supporting small businesses. Pursuing these policies will help us set a better course for our communities and weather future crises.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Actions: Facilitate the growth of child care worker unions; establish staffing standards to protect nursing home residents and workers; tie Medicaid payments to better wages; encourage greater transparency in the ownership and financing of nursing homes

- Resource: [Underpaid and Unequal Racial Wage Disparities in the Early Childhood Workforce](#), Center for American Progress
- Resource: [Setting higher wages for child care and home health care workers is long overdue](#), Economic Policy Institute

RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The science is clear - we cannot afford to wait to confront the climate crisis head-on. We are all at risk, especially the Black, Brown, and Indigenous people living in frontline communities and low-wealth neighborhoods that suffer from polluted air, poisoned water, and toxins in the ground. While Congress can take steps to heal the damage done to our communities and world, the President can take immediate action and address many of our climate challenges through executive order.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Action: Use the Defense Production Act to combat the climate crisis
 - Resource: [Priorities and Allocations: How the Defense Production Act Allows Government to Mobilize Industry to Ensure Popular Well-Being](#), the Roosevelt Institute
- Executive Action and Resources: [Frontlines Climate Justice Executive Action Platform](#), Demos
- Executive Action and Resources: [Sierra Club Executive Action Priorities 2022](#), Sierra Club

TAXING THE ULTRA-RICH AND CORPORATIONS

Billionaires and large corporations continue to get richer and richer while refusing to pay their fair share in taxes. The total net worth of billionaires grew by 57 percent during the pandemic, but most of those gains won't be taxed. It doesn't have to be this way. The Biden Administration can act on its own to fix our broken tax code to close loopholes and make regulatory processes more transparent.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Action: Empower the IRS to address unfair tax evasion

- Resource: [Biden's Tax Enforcement Overhaul Would Be A Positive Step Toward Racial Equity](#), Center for American Progress
- Executive Action: Eliminate the carried interest loophole
 - Resource: [Close the Carried Interest Loophole and End Private Equity Abuse](#), Institute for Policy Studies
- Executive Actions: Replace Trump Administration regulations that eased restrictions on offshore tax loopholes; Rein in the abuse of Opportunity Zones to hide capital gains
 - Resource: [What the Biden Administration Can Do on Its Own, Without Congress, to Fix the Tax Code](#), Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy

VOTING RIGHTS AND PROTECTING DEMOCRACY

Our country works best when everyone's votes are counted. However, recent court rulings and state policies could silence our voices and abrogate years of progress by rigging the rules with voter ID laws, gerrymandering, voter intimidation, and vote suppression. The Biden administration has a historic opportunity to help restore the Voting Rights Act and protect voters' rights.

Executive Actions and Related Resources

- Executive Action and Resources: [Enhancing Accessibility in U.S. Elections](#), Center for American Progress
- Executive Action and Resources: [How and Why the Federal Agencies Can Register Voters](#), Demos
- Executive Actions: Enforce language and right to assistance provisions in the Voting Rights Act and aggressively enforce the VRA; Proactively enforce the National Voter Registration Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Help America Vote Act
 - Resource: [Civil and Human Rights Progress Report](#), The Leadership Council on Civil and Human Rights