

CORONAVIRUS AND THE NEXT RECESSION: SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

With a potential recession in the headlines once again, it is very important to remember that **although an upcoming recession may be sparked by the coronavirus, it will be fueled and deepened by policy choices that have favored the wealthy and well-connected and left the vast majority of workers and families behind.** Policymakers must now act quickly and aggressively to learn the lessons from the last recession and prevent or make an upcoming recession as painless as possible.

The next recession will be fueled and deepened by extreme inequality, low-quality jobs and eroded worker protections, irresponsible austerity budgets, and deregulation.

- Instead of using the last decade's economic recovery as an opportunity to invest in workers and families and strengthen the overall economy with smart regulations and worker protections, conservative policymakers doubled down on flawed trickle-down economics that has led to extreme inequality.
- Conservative policies that have eroded unions, created more low-quality jobs, and eliminated workers' decision-making power on the job have removed key guardrails that rebalance power and protect against corporate recklessness during the good times and provide stability during economic downturns.
- Austerity budgets at the federal and state levels have hollowed out governments' ability to properly respond to financial crises and have left workers and the overall economy more vulnerable to economic downturns.
- America is the only industrialized nation in the world that doesn't guarantee paid sick leave to workers. This is catastrophic for millions of workers who have to choose between staying home to recover and the paycheck they desperately need to pay their bills and support their families and will be devastating in an economic downturn sparked by an infectious disease.

Now that a recession is potentially on the horizon, policymakers must act speedily and aggressively to help workers and families weather an upcoming recession, help the economy get through it as quickly as possible, and avoid the mistakes we made after the last recession.

- It's too late to address the mistakes that have made an upcoming recession more likely and worse than it should be, but policymakers shouldn't wait any longer to take the decisive and aggressive action required to help workers and families get through it.
- This should include immediate and sufficiently large fiscal stimulus focused on workers, families, and communities, particularly communities of color, for whom recessions are deepest and most prolonged.
- It should absolutely not be another excuse for conservatives to give another tax break to the wealthiest Americans and biggest corporations. Tax cuts for the wealthy do nothing to help families who are one crisis away from financial ruin.
- After conservatives spent trillions of dollars on tax cuts for the rich, we can't allow them to tell the American people that we "can't afford" a stimulus that helps workers and families now and over the long-term.

This is another reminder: We are the economy, and an economy that isn't working for all of us isn't going to work at all.

- The economy isn't stock market prices or corporate profits.
- We are the economy, and when we don't invest in policies to help us all succeed, then the economy isn't truly strong and is exposed to recessions that will be deeper and more painful.
- If government policy is oriented toward investing in all of us and supporting broad-based wealth and prosperity, then the economy will be stronger overall and less exposed to devastating recessions.

For more information, you can reach out to Groundwork Collaborative at info@groundworkcollaborative.org