

# The Senate Should be Working on COVID-19 Relief, not the Supreme Court

*The Administration is refusing to work on relief for Americans who are facing hunger, record unemployment, and evictions so that it can push through Judge Barrett's nomination in the middle of an election and a pandemic. The Senate must stop this sham nomination process and focus on the relief and care the country needs.*

- Women are the majority of workers risking their lives to provide health care, child care, and other essential services while simultaneously being overrepresented in many of the occupations feeling the brunt of COVID-19 related job losses<sup>1</sup>
- With schools and childcare centers closed, women have to be caregivers and school teachers, which makes it impossible for them to also be breadwinners.<sup>2</sup> **Eighty percent** of the 1.1 million workers who stopped working or looking for work last month were women: that is **over 800,000 women** leaving the workforce in **September alone**.<sup>3</sup>
- The weekend Justice Ginsburg died, the United States recorded 200,000 deaths from COVID-19; we are now at over 210,000.
- Tens of thousands of Black, Latinx, and Native American people have died from COVID-19;<sup>4</sup> Black, Latinx, and Native American people are more likely than white people to be infected with, be hospitalized for, and die from COVID-19.<sup>5</sup>

- COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the economy. Unemployment is at a historically high level. Millions of jobs have been lost in recent months with many permanently lost and others at risk if coronavirus cases surge and states are forced to shut back down. Women – especially Black women and Latinas – are struggling to make ends meet.
  - o Women have disproportionately suffered pandemic-related job losses; since February 2020 women have lost over 5.8 million net jobs, accounting for 53.9% of the overall net job loss since the start of the crisis.<sup>6</sup>
  - o One in nine Black women and Latinas remain unemployed.<sup>7</sup>
  - o Based on data collected in July, more than 1 in 5 Black women (21.5%) and Latinas (21.1%) reported not having enough food in the past week.<sup>8</sup>
  - o Based on data collected in July, more than 2 in 5 Black women (40.8%) and Latinas (44.6%) reported facing housing insecurity.<sup>9</sup>
- Instead of engaging in a partisan fight over a Supreme Court nomination even as people are already voting, the Senate should be focused on helping Americans by:
  - o passing the updated HEROES Act, which provides direct payments to individuals most harmed from this crisis, stops evictions for 12 months, and provides needed funds for child care, rental assistance, and increased SNAP benefits;
  - o reinstating and extending the \$600 in unemployment insurance that expired at the end of July;
  - o offering robust and flexible aid to stabilize state and local governments on the frontlines of this crisis;
  - o ensuring a critically needed increase in federal funds to support state Medicaid programs; and
  - o providing at least \$50 billion in relief funding to stabilize the child care sector.

- 1 NWLC, Women on the Frontlines (March 2020), [https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/final\\_NWLC\\_Frontlines\\_FactSheet-002.pdf](https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/final_NWLC_Frontlines_FactSheet-002.pdf)
- 2 Misty L. Heggeness and Jason M. Fields, U.S. Census Bureau, Working Moms Bear Brunt of Home Schooling while Working During COVID-19 (August 18, 2020), <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2020/08/parents-juggle-work-and-child-care-during-pandemic.html>.
- 3 Claire Ewing-Nelson, NWLC, Four Times More Women Than Men Dropped Out of the Labor Force in September (October 2020), <https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/september-jobs-fs1.pdf>.
- 4 CDC, Demographic Trends of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the US reported to the CDC, [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcases-updates%2Fcases-in-us.html#demographics](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcases-updates%2Fcases-in-us.html#demographics).
- 5 CDC, COVID-19 Hospitalization and Death by Race/Ethnicity, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-race-ethnicity.htm>.
- 6 Ewing-Nelson, *supra*, note 3.
- 7 *Id.*
- 8 Jasmine Tucker and Claire Ewing-Nelson, NWLC, COVID-19 is Making Women's Economic Situation Even Worse (September 2020), <https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/PulsedataFS.pdf>.
9. *Id.*