

SAVE OUR COUNTRY: FIVE PRINCIPLES

I. Immediately reopen the economy, while implementing the best workplace practices to protect the health of our citizens.

In mid-March 2020, the United States had an unemployment rate of 3.5 percent and the economy was strong. As of last week, nearly 17 million Americans have lost their jobs because of the extreme actions of some state and local governments to lockdown their businesses. If government officials do not allow people to return to work very soon, we will experience a severe contraction and perhaps a depression. It's time to allow people to get back to work. State and local governments must begin to reopen their states' economies to allow business owners, who operate on thin profit margins, to put the pieces back together and begin the economic recovery. It is possible and preferable for Americans to learn and to practice social distancing, and for employers to develop, implement and share best practices for hygiene to promote and protect the good health of their employees and customers alike, without micromanagement from government. America's greatest strength is freedom, and the present situation is untenable for America's long term health as a nation.

II. Restore the essential principles of limited government and fiscal responsibility by stopping the trillions of dollars of federal spending that is imperiling America's economic future and dangerously escalating our national debt.

Before the legislative responses to COVID-19, Congress was already going to run a \$1.073 trillion budget deficit for FY 2020 and the national debt already exceeded \$23 trillion. Lawmakers have utterly failed to responsibly constrain spending to make it easier to deal with a crisis, and the result is at nearly \$2.5 trillion of immediate spending passed in response to the crisis. Another \$2 trillion bill is now under debate. More spending will only harm the recovery and leave future generations saddled with even more debt.

III. Incentivize the rapid rebuilding of our economy through proven formulas: tax cuts, deregulation, and lawsuit reform

Immediately create incentives for entrepreneurship and creativity to business and the American people, recognizing that all solutions to reopening the economy cannot and will not come from government.

Rather than ineffectually spending more money, Congress should pass a liability shield for businesses that take responsible measures to protect their employees. Lawmakers should also take the step of providing a holiday from the payroll tax and capital gains tax. A payroll tax holiday would provide an immediate influx of cash to Americans who are currently working and struggling to make ends meet. A capital gains tax holiday would encourage investment and economic growth, helping boost Americans' retirement accounts, which have been hurt by the response to COVID-19. These steps, among others that encourage growth, will allow the private sector to flourish and lead us back into an economic boom.

IV. Preserve federalism within the rule of law and respect the rights of the states in dealing with crises like the coronavirus

The role of the federal government is to share expertise and to develop guidelines for the safe reopening of the economy, but the states and local governments must ensure that all government orders and restrictions must be narrowly tailored to address specific, identifiable risks, rather than wholesale infringing on Americans' civil liberties and rights under the United States Constitution.

The Bill of Rights protects Americans' civil liberties -- including but not limited to the freedom of assembly, the right to petition the government, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to associate, the right to the free exercise of religion and due process -- at all times, including in times of crisis. There is no clause in the Constitution that allows the federal government to suspend our precious rights and liberties during the time of a crisis. The Bill of Rights was created exactly for moments like these, and we must jealously guard them, not sacrifice them on the altar of security. Any response to COVID-19 must be narrowly tailored and specific, rather than blanket restrictions that violate protected civil liberties.

V. Protect the individual liberties of our citizens from unconstitutional power grabs by the federal, state and local governments.

The basic rights of our citizens are under assault in the era of coronavirus. The First Amendment rights of freedom of assembly, free association, free exercise of religion, and the right to petition the government have all been violated by government orders in the name of stopping coronavirus. Americans' 2d and 4th Amendment rights are under assault, and our rights to work, earn a living, and operate a business have also been abrogated.

Americans are being fined and even arrested for violating "shelter in place" orders and curfews or even for attending church for drive-in services!

The Fourth Amendment protects Americans from illegal searches and seizures. The federal, state and local governments must not overreach to surveil or use geolocation data on Americans' movements. Congress should prohibit access to or the use of third-party data by federal agencies and pass legislation restricting the use of third-party data for the purposes of geolocation tracking. Any widespread coronavirus testing programs must strictly adhere to and embody Constitutional protections.