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## Historic \$2.2 Trillion Coronavirus Bill Passes US House

By: Telesur

28/03/2020



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The U.S. House of Representatives on Friday approved a \$2.2 trillion aid package - the largest in history - to help cope with the economic downturn inflicted by the intensifying coronavirus pandemic. At the same time, President Donald Trump quickly signed it into law.

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The massive bill passed the Senate and House of Representatives nearly unanimously. The rare bipartisan action underscored how seriously Republican and Democratic lawmakers are taking the global pandemic that has killed more than 1,500 Americans and shaken the nation's medical system.

"This will deliver urgently needed relief," Trump said as he signed the bill in the Oval Office, flanked only by Republican lawmakers. He thanked members of both parties for putting Americans "first."

For her part, the House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said at the close of a three-hour debate before the lower chamber approved the bill, "our nation faces an economic and health emergency of historic proportions due to the coronavirus pandemic, the worst pandemic in over 100 years."

Americans deserve a full-on government response "to address these threats to their lives and their livelihood, and they need it now," she added.

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The historic \$2.2 trillion legislation will speed government payments of \$1,200 to most Americans and increase jobless benefits for millions of people thrown out of work. Businesses big and small will get loans, grants, and tax breaks. It will send unprecedented billions to states and local governments, and the nation's all but overwhelmed health care system.

"This will deliver urgently needed relief to our nation's families, workers, and businesses," Trump said.

"I really think in a fairly short period of time ... we'll be stronger than ever," he highlighted during the all-Republican signing ceremony for the bill, to which neither Pelosi nor Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer was invited.

The United States, one of the countries with the most contagious with the new coronavirus, surpassed 100,000 this Friday, with more than 1,600 deaths. At the same time, the doctors and nurses on the front lines of the U.S. COVID-19 crisis asked for more protective gear and equipment to treat waves of patients expected to overwhelm hospitals.

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