

# GET MONEY OUT

Maryland

## Honor the Memory of John Lewis and Other Voting Rights Martyrs by Taking Action Today

On August 5, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act. In 2013, the Supreme Court struck down a key element of the VRA and ushered in an era of brazen voter suppression. Partisan scheming and the corrosive forces of big money now threaten the foundation of our democracy.

The pandemic has created fears of entering polling places among the public and among poll workers. Local and state election officials all over the country are unsure about how to plan for the election and about funding because state and local [revenues](#) are down by 20%. These officials desperately need *extra* funds to send mail-in ballots to hundreds of millions of voters; to hire a million poll workers; and to secure computer networks and voter databases, voting machines, polling places, drop boxes, and post offices. Ballot-counting will also take longer and cost more.

Chaos will reign if funding of the election apparatus is seriously inadequate. Since many of these are local expenses, majority minority communities will be harder hit than more affluent areas. Congress has done little to assure the fairness, accessibility, safety, and security of the November elections. Election officials are begging for help, and most voters want access to mail-in voting. Voting rights advocates are asking for \$3.6 billion in aid to help states with election expenses. That's only \$16 per voting-age citizen. Every voter must be able to choose to 1) vote by postage-paid mail or drop-off, or 2) vote in-person during an early voting period or on election day.

## TAKE ACTION NOW

**"Please call @ChrisVanHollen at 202-224-4654 and Sen. Ben Cardin at 202-224-4524 and tell them that a Senate bill with no help to states for a fair election is UNACCEPTABLE. #ProtectOurVote"**

**Please also Tweet the above message or post on Facebook.**



Here in Maryland, [Gov. Hogan persists](#) in ignoring the advice and pleas of both Republican and Democratic election officials. To avoid confusion and extra expense, he should issue an emergency order requiring that every Maryland voter be sent a mail-in ballot. We cannot know how severe COVID-19 will be in October and November, and election officials must instruct the printer very soon. *Please call Gov. Larry Hogan at 410-947-3901 and urge him to change his decision.*

## This Depression Is Hurting Families

In our last update, we told you that economic production ("GDP") was projected to be down around 35% for the quarter ending June 30. It actually came in at -32%. Now the projection by the Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank is for a rise of +20% in the third calendar quarter. Even if that happens, the net result will be right around the level of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Fifty-one percent of households have lost employment income since March, and 30 million workers remain on unemployment aid, [contradicting the government's unemployment data](#). Twenty-three million people face eviction and the Census Bureau reports that over 26% of households question whether they can pay next month's [rent or mortgage payment](#). There is little prospect of early improvement with COVID-19 or with the economy.



Why, you might ask, were Republicans willing in March to pass a law with eviction and foreclosure moratoriums, \$1,200 income supplements, small-business loans, and \$600 in unemployment supplements, and now they seem unwilling to renew measures that aid the working class? The answer may lie in the fact that the stock and bond markets have recovered. The Federal Reserve poured over \$2 trillion into the markets *outside of the CARES Act*, and the [biggest corporations are doing well](#). Only about [\\$100 billion](#) of the \$4.54 trillion slush fund for corporations has been doled out so far, while aid for workers has expired.

## Money in Politics and COVID Corruption

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who got more free TV time than Beyonce and Joe Biden combined, was used on cable news to counter President Trump's media dominance. While his success in handling the coronavirus can be debated, his adroitness in serving his political patrons is world class. One-third of New York's 118 billionaires donated to his campaign accounts, and, in turn, he [blocked](#) a proposed tax hike on high incomes that would have allowed the state to maintain some of its vital services.



In contemplating pandemic relief, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell continues to prioritize immunity for business executives and board members *vis a vis* lawsuits from workers and customers. In the initial version of McConnell's bill, the immunity language was [copied word-for-word](#) from language that Gov. Cuomo had rammed through the legislature in New York. Now, it looks as though New York will repeal some provisions of that law.

*The New York Times* reports that [YRC Trucking](#), long struggling with financial problems, received a \$700 million loan from the U.S. Treasury that was intended for firms that are critical to national security. The firm merely delivers food to military bases, and skeptics are charging that the loan occurred because YRC owes money to a firm that has close connections with the Trump administration. The loan fund was intended to help companies that were hurt by the pandemic, not those with ongoing solvency issues.

Eastman Kodak has been balancing on the brink of bankruptcy for many years. But late last month, Kodak inked a \$765 million deal with the Federal government to make pharmaceutical ingredients. Several executives got [secret stock options](#) just days before the deal was signed. The stock then jumped more than ten-fold.

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*If you have more time, please consider using [this guide](#) to write a quick letter to the editor. The guide makes it easy both to compose a letter and to send it to local media outlets.*

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## Previous issues of Corruption Busters

[Corruption Busters #7](#)

[Corruption Busters #3](#)

[Corruption Busters #6](#)

[Corruption Busters #2](#)

[Corruption Busters #5](#)

[Corruption Busters #1](#)

[Corruption Busters #4](#)

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### GMOM Teleconference Monday, August 10, 7:30 pm

#### Two ways to join the conference

- 1) Dial 1 301 715 8592, meeting ID: 931 3066 2622. Call 410-624-6095 for the password.
- 2) [Click](#) on your device if you have downloaded the app from [Zoom](#).



#### [Meeting Agenda:](#)

We will assess actions that Congress has taken and begin to decide priorities for the coming weeks.

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[GET MONEY OUT - MARYLAND, INC. \(GMOM\)](#) is a group of volunteers trying to get big money out of our political system and make our elections fairer. Through our work on Maryland's [Democracy Amendment Resolution](#), we are pursuing a U.S. Constitutional amendment to guarantee every citizen's right to vote, reserve Constitutional rights for human beings, and regulate money in politics.

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