



The New Affordability Agenda

The Congressional Progressive Caucus recognizes that the Americans are facing a cost-of-living crisis and hungry for new ideas to address it. At the same time, Democrats are searching for a vision that wins back the trust of working families and provides a mandate to deliver the big changes our country needs in 2026.

The New Affordability Agenda lays out bold new policies that will make things cheaper in America by taking on wealthy special interests and corrupt billionaires. This agenda would bring down the major costs most families deal with, including health care, groceries, utilities, housing, childcare, and gas.

The CPC is committed to championing structural changes, including creating a path to universal healthcare with proposals to expand Medicare coverage and benefits to eventually cover everyone under a Medicare For All system, enacting a living wage for all, allowing every worker who wants a union to join one, abolishing child poverty, and making major investments in bold climate action and dignified home and community-based care for every family. The New Affordability Agenda represents an immediate step toward these goals, with policies that can be embraced by all Democrats and deliver relief to voters in specific, targeted ways.

The New Affordability Agenda focuses on easily explainable policies that deliver economic relief broadly and quickly. That is why every single one of these policies is supported by supermajorities of Americans, including 3 in 5 *Republicans*.

Every single Democrat should be able to unite around this agenda. The CPC is proud to present the New Affordability Agenda as a path for moderates, progressives, swing- and safe-district Democrats alike to address the top problem facing working people. Pairing this proactive vision with a commitment to aggressively hold this administration accountable, Democrats can defeat Trumpism and deliver for the American people.

The New Affordability Agenda is a slate of creative new bills to help families get ahead by making things cheaper, putting money in pockets, and getting big money out of politics.

1. PRESCRIPTION DRUGS people can afford

Policy: To make prescription drugs cheaper, the [Affordable Drug Manufacturing Act](#) creates a federal program to directly manufacture generic drugs—such as insulin, asthma inhalers, naloxone, epinephrine auto-injectors, and antibiotics—and offer them to Americans at a discounted price. Ninety percent of all prescriptions filled in America are generics, but too many

remain out of reach due to Big Pharma's tactics, such as extending or adding unrelated patents to delay the entry of generic medicines and keep costs high.

- Sponsor: Rep. Schakowsky
- Cost reduction: Price of brand-name insulin could fall from \$300 per vial to \$50. Naloxone, used to treat opioid overdoses, could fall from \$50 to below \$20.

2. GROCERIES people can afford

Policies: To make food cheaper, The New Affordability Agenda attacks the corporate stranglehold over crop production and cracks down on price fixing by big grocery store chains. As Americans [cite](#) the price of groceries as their top affordability concern thanks to Trump's reckless trade and foreign policy, the New Affordability Agenda takes an all-of-the-above approach to curbing price increases.

- The [Fair Competition for Small Business Act](#) cracks down on price fixing by big grocery chains and producers by allowing state attorneys general to seek financial compensation from companies that engage in anti-competitive behaviors and price discrimination.
- Sponsor: Rep. Waters
- A soon-to-be-released bill will make it cheaper to grow food by reducing corporate control over seed patents, allowing farmers to save and replant their seeds with greater control and at lower cost, instead of needing to buy new seeds each year.
- Forthcoming sponsor: Rep. McGovern

3. HOUSING people can afford

Policy: To make housing cheaper, a new, comprehensive bill from House Financial Services Committee Ranking Member Waters will offer universal downpayment assistance for first-time homeowners; \$1 trillion in solving the chronic undersupply of homes; and help millions of American renters by making a massive investment in rental assistance. This suite of investments will guarantee that millions of housing units are newly built, maintained or preserved.

- Sponsor: Rep. Waters
- \$20,000 in assistance to first-time homebuyers as support for downpayment, closing costs and mortgage interest rate buydowns; \$1 trillion to create and preserve affordable and accessible housing, support public housing, expand homeownership opportunities, and expand rental assistance.

3. UTILITY BILLS people can afford

Policy: To make utility bills cheaper, a new bill from Rep. Casar will crack down on for-profit utilities price gouging consumers. The bill stops for-profit utilities from making consumers pay for unreasonable costs like lobbying, fines, and the incidental expenses of corporate executives.

It creates a federal standard for just and reasonable rate increases in electricity and gas bills issued by for-profit utility companies and prioritizes cost-saving efficiency investments over corporate profits.

- Sponsor: Rep. Casar
- Saves households nearly \$500 annually

5. CHILDCARE people can afford

Policy: The Progressive Caucus is committed to providing good jobs for service workers and expanding care to children, Americans with medical needs, and seniors.

To make childcare cheaper, the [Child Care for Every Community Act](#) takes an innovative approach to one of these pillars, providing federal funding for states and localities to quickly provide universal access to high-quality, affordable child care in every community. Half of all families nationwide will pay no more than \$10 a day for child care and costs will be capped for all at no more than 7% of household income. This approach discards cumbersome, insufficient block grants and guarantees that Americans in both red and blue states get the childcare they deserve. It promises rapid implementation with minimal red tape for beneficiaries and a federal structure that invests in childcare based on the massive need.

- Sponsor: Rep. Ocasio-Cortez
- A middle-income family could save roughly \$10,000 a year receiving \$10-a-day full-time, year-round care for their child

6. GAS people can afford

Policy: As Trump's disastrous and illegal war on Iran triggers a global spike in oil prices, the [Big Oil Windfall Profits Tax Act](#) curbs profiteering by oil companies and provides Americans relief at the gas pump. Large oil companies that produce or import at least 300,000 barrels of oil per day will pay a tax that is half the difference between the current price per barrel of oil and the average price per barrel last year. This will be returned to most consumers as a quarterly rebate check.

- Sponsor: Rep. Khanna
- At \$100 per barrel of oil, single filers making under \$75,000 would receive \$216 and joint filers making under \$150,000 would receive \$324 annually.

7. Lowering Costs by Ending AI PRICE GOUGING

Policy: [Stop AI Price Gouging and Wage Fixing Act](#) bans companies from using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to set prices or wages based on Americans' personal data. It would prohibit practices like an airline raising prices for someone who searches for a family obituary or a rideshare app paying a driver less after seeing that she visited a pawn shop.

- Sponsor: Rep. Casar
- Companies from Instacart to The Washington Post have recently been exposed for price gouging using AI.

8. VACATION TIME people can afford

Policy: Americans should be able to afford not just the things that make a good life, but the time they need to enjoy it. America is the only advanced economy that doesn't guarantee paid vacation to all workers. In the richest country on earth, nearly 27 million Americans – or over one in five workers in the private sector – do not have access to annual paid vacation.

The [PTO Act](#) provides every full-time worker with no less than two weeks of annual leave in addition to any paid sick leave or family and medical leave already guaranteed by law.

- Sponsor: Rep. Magaziner
- Workers who currently lack paid leave make roughly \$24/hr on average, making this benefit the wage equivalent of \$1933 for two weeks of guaranteed paid vacation.

9. MONEY in people's pockets

Policy: In addition to the caucus's longstanding commitments to a federal minimum wage that is truly a living, family-sustaining wage, and the right to a union for all workers, the CPC is introducing a new approach to raising wages: making companies pay double time for overtime hours.

For the first time in almost 90 years, this forthcoming bill would raise federal overtime pay to twice a worker's wage for every hour worked over 40 hours a week, instead of the current rate of time and a half. This puts more money in the pockets of employees who work overtime, while deterring companies from abusing and overworking their employees, which can lead to unpredictable hours, burnout and turnover.

- Sponsors: Reps. Casar, Jayapal
- 13.4 million workers will see some combination of higher pay and more time off
- A worker making \$25/hr and working about 10 hours of overtime every week could make as much as \$6,500 more per year than they would under current law.

10. Getting Big Money Out of Politics

One of the main reasons things are so expensive is that billionaires can buy policies that screw over working people. Before *Citizens United*, the share of billionaire spending in elections was 0.3 percent. Today, it's more than 19 percent, comprised of 300 billionaires and their immediate family members making campaign contributions.

The [Abolish Super PACs Act](#) caps contributions to super PACs at \$5,000 per calendar year, effectively ending the role of super PACs as vehicles for unlimited contributions. Abolishing the unlimited spending power of Super PACs will go a long way to creating an economy that works for all of us.

- Sponsor: Rep. Summer Lee
- Costs go up for everyday Americans when corporations can buy our elections and pick our politicians.