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Republicans and Democrats reached a hard-won agreement on the Senate's \$2 trillion worth of fiscal stimulus to shore up an economy crippled by the coronavirus pandemic.

The final version was the product of intense negotiations between Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. With the measure clearing the Senate, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi will be under pressure to pass the measure quickly for President Donald Trump to sign into law.

## Senate Passes \$2 Trillion Virus Rescue Plan (11:48 p.m.)

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### Senate Begins Vote on \$2 Trillion Virus Bill (11:18)

The Senate began the final vote on its historic rescue package. This is the [final version](#) of the legislation. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said the Senate won't have any additional votes scheduled until April 20.

### Text of \$2 Trillion Stimulus Plan Is Circulated (8:24 p.m.)

Senate negotiators circulated the text of the coronavirus stimulus measure in what was labeled a final draft of the negotiated agreement. A copy was obtained by Bloomberg News.

A Senate official, however, insisted that the bill text wasn't quite final.

### Mnuchin Expects Senate Bill To Pass Tonight (6:19 p.m.)

Mnuchin dismissed an objection raised by four Republican senators regarding the bill's [unemployment insurance](#) provision and said he expects the Senate to quickly pass the legislation.

"Our expectation is this bill passes tonight and gets to the House tomorrow and they pass it," Mnuchin told reporters at the White House.

Trump, at the same press conference, said he will sign the bill as soon as it gets through Congress.

"I encourage the House to pass this vital legislation and send the bill to my desk for my signature without delay. I will sign it immediately."

### Final Details Holding Up Virus Bill Vote (4:22 p.m.)

More than 12 hours after Senate leaders announced an agreement, negotiations are continuing over various parts of the final text of the \$2 trillion coronavirus relief

package, including language regarding abortion providers, according to a person

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A Senate dispute over the virus stimulus package grew deeper Wednesday when Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders threatened to hold up the bill if changes to unemployment benefits are made to satisfy some Republicans. The standoff threatens to delay a Senate vote on the \$2 trillion measure.

Four GOP senators earlier Wednesday pressed for a cap on unemployment benefits to ensure laid-off workers aren't paid more than their previous level of wages. They said that otherwise employers would have an incentive to lay off workers so they could get higher benefits.

Sanders, a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, said he would block the legislation himself if the Republicans did not relent. Sanders says he wants tougher oversight on aid for corporations and wants to require them to pay higher wages and stop offshoring jobs.

"It would be an outrage to prevent working-class Americans to receive emergency unemployment assistance included in this legislation," said Sanders. — Erik Wasson

## **Three GOP Senators Seek Jobless Benefit Change (2:06 p.m.)**

Three Republican senators — Ben Sasse, Tim Scott and Lindsey Graham — are threatening to delay a Senate vote on the virus stimulus bill until changes are made to its unemployment benefits section.

The senators argue that by allowing unemployment benefits to exceed employees' pay in some cases, the bill would create an incentive for layoffs and supply chain disruptions.

"If the federal government accidentally incentivizes layoffs, we risk life-threatening shortages in sectors where doctors, nurses, and pharmacists are trying to care for the

sick, and where growers and grocers, truckers and cooks are trying to get food to

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on the Senate floor. It's time to pass it.

The House, meanwhile, plans to give members 24 hours' notice before voting, second-ranking Democrat Steny Hoyer said in a letter to members.

"We must have the final legislative text and clear direction on when the Senate will vote," Hoyer said.

Pelosi has said she wants the House to act by voice vote, without having to call members to Washington. Some Democratic members have said they want time to examine the bill.

House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy urged the chamber to move ahead as soon as possible, saying in a statement, "We are already behind."

## **McConnell Says Senate to 'Act Together' on Bill (12:30 p.m.)**

McConnell said he'll consult with Schumer on when to hold an initial vote on advancing the stimulus measure.

"The Senate is going to stand together, act together, and pass this historic relief package today," McConnell said as the chamber opened for business.

## **Virus Stimulus Provides Employer Payroll Tax Holiday (11:39 a.m.)**

GOP Senator Pat Toomey told reporters the plan will cost about \$2 trillion and will include a "long list" of tax incentives, including a two-year suspension of the employer share of payroll taxes, and an employee-retention tax credit for employers too big for small business loans. It will be up to 50 percent of wages, Toomey said.

Toomey said the package would provide \$100 billion directly to hospitals and health

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but doesn't restrict issuance of corporate debt.

"We have been invaded by a species that has the ability to kill many, many Americans; in response the government has shut down our economy," Toomey said. "This is a massive intervention."

## **Pelosi Praises Plan as 'Closer' to Workers (9:01 a.m.)**

The bill "has moved a great deal closer to America's workers" after negotiations with Democrats, Pelosi said in a statement Wednesday morning.

"House Democrats will now review the final provisions and legislative text of the agreement to determine a course of action," Pelosi said.

She had said Tuesday that she hoped the House would be able to pass a Senate measure by voice vote without having to bring members to Washington. That is only an option if no House member objects.

## **Bipartisan Deal Sets Up Stimulus Vote in Senate (8:30 a.m.)**

The agreement clears the way for the Senate to vote as soon as Wednesday and send the measure to the House. The Democratic-led House will have to pass the same version before sending it to Trump.

"It is a good bill," Schumer, the Senate's top Democrat, told CNN Wednesday morning. "This is the art of compromise. This is the art of coming together. America needed huge help quickly and I think we've risen to that occasion."

The [plan](#) includes about \$500 billion that can be used to back loans and assistance to companies, including \$50 billion for loans to U.S. airlines, as well as state and local



governments. It also has more than \$350 billion to aid small businesses. Then there

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Any company receiving a government loan would be subject to a ban on stock buybacks through the term of the loan plus one additional year. They also would have to limit executive bonuses and take steps to protect workers. The Treasury Department would have to disclose the terms of loans or other aid to companies and a new Treasury inspector general would oversee the lending program. — Laura Litvan

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