

THE POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

A NATIONAL CALL FOR MORAL REVIVAL

Poverty takes an enormous toll on this country and its people every day. The economic and social costs of poverty and the injustices of systemic racism, militarism and ecological devastation are unsustainable. The United States has the wealth to end these interlocking injustices, but the political will is lacking. This is why we are organizing among those most impacted by these injustices to compel this country to take action. Fight poverty, not the poor!

The economic and social costs of poverty are high:

- Child poverty costs more than [\\$1 trillion per year](#) in lost economic productivity, increased health and crime costs, and increased costs resulting from child homelessness and maltreatment.¹
- Unstable housing among families with children will cost the U.S. [\\$111 billion](#) in avoidable health and special education costs over the next ten years.²
- Hunger costs [\\$160 billion per year](#) in increased health care costs and another \$18.8 billion to poor educational outcomes.³
- Public assistance programs spend [\\$153 billion](#) a year as a direct result of low wages.⁴
- 250,000 die of poverty and inequality every year.⁵

The costs of economic inequality, systemic racism, ecological devastation, and militarism are high:

- Gender⁶ and racial wage gaps⁷ cost workers \$2.6 trillion per year in lost earnings.
- Mass incarceration costs \$179 billion⁸ per year for policing, courts and private operations and another \$78-87 billion⁹ in lost job opportunities after being incarcerated.
- Our immigration system costs \$123 billion in lost contributions to GDP.¹⁰
- Our current health care system costs individuals \$1.69 trillion on private insurance and out of pocket expenses.¹¹
- Inaction on climate change is estimated to eventually cost our economy \$3.3 trillion every year.¹²
- Our government has spent \$6.4 trillion on wars since 2001.¹³
- Our government lost \$1.3 trillion by lowering the corporate tax rate from 35% to 21% in 2017. After receiving these tax cuts, U.S. corporations announced \$936 billion in stock buybacks, giving the money back to themselves.¹⁴

While investing in anti-poverty and social programs has economy-wide benefits:

- Raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 per hour would put \$328 billion into the hands of families and households, who will spend most of that back into the economy.¹⁵ Raising the minimum wage by just \$2 could have prevented more than 57,000 suicides between 1990-2015.¹⁶
- For every \$1 per hour that wages rise among workers in the bottom 60% of earners, spending on government assistance programs falls by roughly [\\$5.2 billion](#).¹⁷
- \$1 billion in SNAP benefits creates [\\$1.70 billion](#) in economic growth.¹⁸ In rural areas, SNAP benefits [created jobs](#) in counties where benefits were received and in neighboring counties, creating more jobs per dollar than an investment in the military.¹⁹
- Every \$1 invested in early childhood education leads to [\\$7.30 in savings](#) from increased earnings, better health, and lower incarceration rates.²⁰
- A [\\$100 billion infrastructure investment](#) could create 1 million jobs and lead to \$150 billion in economic growth.²¹
- Investing [\\$37.2 billion](#) in critical water infrastructure could create 700,000 to 945,000 jobs across the economy.²²
- Many states that expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act experienced employment growth that was [1.3 percent higher](#) than in states that did not expand Medicaid.²³
- Universal health care would save our economy \$278 billion per year.²⁴
- Investing \$1 million in clean energy, education, health care or infrastructure would [create more jobs](#) than investing that same \$1 million in the military.

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