

Trump signs executive orders after stimulus talks break down on Capitol Hill

By [Jeremy Diamond](#), Nicky Robertson and [Kristen Holmes](#), CNN

Updated 2213 GMT (0613 HKT) August 8, 2020

(CNN) — President Donald Trump signed four executive orders Saturday, one of which will provide as much as \$400 in enhanced unemployment benefits -- 25% of which states are being asked to cover -- after Democrats and the White House were unable to reach an agreement on a coronavirus stimulus relief bill this week.

The other three orders he signed include a payroll tax holiday for Americans earning less than \$100,000 a year, as well as extending an eviction moratorium and deferring student loan payments.

"I'm taking action to provide an additional or extra \$400 a week and expanded benefits, \$400. That's generous but we want to take care of our people," Trump said at his golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey.

Trump said \$300 (75%) of the enhanced aid will come from the federal government, and \$100 (25%) will therefore have to come from the states. Since governors would have to pay that \$100 for people to get the full benefit, it is not clear how many of those unemployed would be able to receive the full \$400 benefit.

But when asked about the President's executive order asking states to pay 25% of the \$400 unemployment relief, an official from a northeastern state run by a Democratic governor laughed. "We don't have that money," the official said.

This official went on to say that they were not given any heads up on this executive order and that in the wake of the pandemic, their funds are completely tapped.

Governors like Larry Hogan of Maryland, a Republican, and Andrew Cuomo of New York, a Democrat, have been pleading for more federal funding.

Democrats had demanded more money for state and local governments in the stimulus talks. On a private call with GOP senators on Friday, Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and White House chief of staff Mark Meadows said they believed that those demands had become the biggest sticking point over a deal, multiple sources told CNN.

When asked by a reporter on Saturday why \$400 instead of the previous \$600, Trump responded, "This is the money they need, this is the money they want, this gives them a great incentive to go back to work."

He went on to say, "there was a difficulty with the 600 number because it really was a disincentive."

Trump administration officials had maintained some people receiving the original \$600 extra benefit would not have an incentive to return to work because they were making more with unemployment aid than they did in salary. Democrats strongly disagreed with that contention.

Trump said he believes that the unemployment aid will be "rapidly distributed," even though there are potential challenges over the legality of his executive action.

Democrats are likely to challenge the executive actions in court. Trump first laid out the executive orders at a hastily called news conference on Friday at his New Jersey golf club, where he said he wasn't concerned about the legality of the actions he promised.

Trump also said Saturday his administration was looking at additional income tax and capital gains tax cuts for American taxpayers, besides the payroll tax holiday being instituted by executive order.

"We are going to be looking at capital gains for the purpose of creating jobs and income taxes is self explanatory, and it will be income tax for middle income and lower income people but middle income people who pay a lot of income tax, you have tax inequality. I'm saying that as a Republican, and you do have tax inequality," Trump said.

He did not provide further details.

This story has been updated with additional developments.



World

US Politics

Business

Health

Entertainment

Tech

Style

Travel

Sports

Videos

Features

More

Weather