

Higgins: American Rescue Plan LAYS GROUNDWORK FOR BETTER TOMORROW

Family of 4 earning under \$150,000 to receive direct payment of \$5,600; \$775 million in aid for municipalities in Erie & Niagara counties

Congressman Brian Higgins, D-NY-26, announced the House of Representatives approved the American Rescue Plan, the final Congressional action before the bill is signed into law by President Joe Biden.

Higgins said, "The ambition and clear vision of the American Rescue Plan meets this perilous moment. Our communities will be given tools to recover, our neighbors will be given resources to take care of their children and get back on their feet, and our nation will demonstrate that when we alleviate suffering for Americans who are hurting, we make our country stronger."

Higgins detailed what is in the package for Western New York families:

•Direct payments to Americans: Individuals earning up to \$75,000, head of household filers earning up to \$112,500, and joint filers earning up to \$150,000 would receive the full direct payment of \$1,400 per person – including dependents as defined for tax purposes. Individuals earning between \$75,000 and \$80,000, head of household filers earning between \$112,500 and \$120,000, and joint filers earning between \$150,000 and \$160,000, will receive an amount less than \$1,400 per person and dependent on a sliding scale. Income levels are based on adjusted gross income on 2020 taxes if already filed, or 2019 taxes if 2020 taxes have not yet been filed. The White House indicated the payments will go out this month.

•Child Tax Credit: For the 2021 filing year, increases the Child Tax Credit (CTC) to \$3,000 for per child ages 6-17 and \$3,600 for children under age 6, and makes the credit fully refundable. The legislation directs the Treasury to provide families with advance payments of the CTC, which could be issued periodically beginning July. Individuals earning up to \$75,000, head of household filers earning up to \$112,500, and joint filers earning up to \$150,000 would receive the full credit. Advance payments would be phased down for those with higher earnings. Further guidance will be issued. It is projected that this measure will cut child poverty in the U.S. in half.

•Earned Income Tax Credit: Significantly increases the maximum Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for childless working adults, and expands eligibility to workers age 19-24 (who are not full-time students) and working seniors by eliminating the 25-64 age limit for tax year 2021. The credit is already available to low-income working families.

•Child & Dependent Care

Tax Credit: Families earning up to \$125,000 are eligible to receive a credit for half of their first \$16,000 in child care expenses, and those earning up to \$400,000 can receive a credit for at least 20% of the first \$16,000.

•Unemployment: Extends pandemic unemployment benefits of \$300 per week through Sept. 6. It allows for the first \$10,200 of unemployment benefits received in 2020 to be tax-free for households making less than \$150,000.

•Health care: Expands subsidies in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace through 2022. Under the bill, no one will have to pay more than 8.5% of their income for a silver plan, resulting in significant savings for individuals of all ages. The Urban Institute estimates these provisions could lead to 4.5 million more Americans gaining coverage. For newly unemployed individuals who choose COBRA, the legislation provides a 100% subsidy.

•Veterans: Eliminates copays for preventative treatment or COVID-19-related services retroactively to April 2020, and reimburses veterans who already paid bills for care during this period. Provides close to \$400 million to provide veterans who are out of work with rapid retaining and housing allowances.

•Utility assistance: Provides \$4.5 billion through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and \$500 million through the Low-Income Household Drinking Water and Wastewater Emergency Program to help struggling families with heat, water and sewer bills.

•Food security: Extends the 15% increase in SNAP benefits through Sept. 30. Provides \$750 million to senior nutrition programs including Meals on Wheels. Extends the pandemic EBT program through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency to ensure low-income children receiving free or reduced school lunches continue to receive meals even if their school has not yet returned to in-person instruction.

•Education: Directs \$125 billion nationwide to help K-12 children and teachers safely return to



school. Includes an additional \$40 billion for institutions of higher education, with the requirement that 50% of the aid help struggling college students.

As Higgins reported previously, the American Rescue Plan will also address the urgent public health needs related to the pandemic and provide relief to businesses and communities.

•Health: Allocates \$7.5 billion to quickly get vaccines in the arms of Americans. Additional funding supports COVID-19 testing, the increased need for mental health and substance abuse treatments, and resources to address racial health disparities.

•Business: Provides \$28.6 billion in direct relief for struggling neighborhood restaurants with \$5 billion set aside for establishments with under \$500,000 in gross receipts in 2019. Expands the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

to include additional nonprofits and provides additional funding for the program. Adds \$15 billion for Economic Injury Disaster Loan EIDL grants targeting help for underserved sole proprietors and very small businesses. Provides an additional \$1.25 billion for the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program (SVOG) and allows shuttered venues to apply for both PPP and SVOG. Flexible investment funding totaling \$3 billion will be provided through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to help rebuild local economies including \$750 million for travel, tourism and outdoor recreation sectors.

•Community: Under the bill, Erie and Niagara counties will receive nearly \$775 million in direct aid. The NFTA will receive more than \$79.4 million for public transit and \$170,529 for paratransit plus additional funding dedicated to air-

port relief. Communities will also receive funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and resources to help those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The package also provides grants to fire departments, libraries, and arts and cultural institutions that have had to make adjustments due to COVID-19 protocols.

Biden signed the American Rescue Plan into law on Thursday.

- Among the local awards:
- ✓ Cambria: \$630,000
 - ✓ Hartland: \$440,000
 - ✓ Lewiston: \$1,730,000
 - ✓ Lockport (City): \$2,230,000
 - ✓ Lockport (Town): \$2,180,000
 - ✓ Newfane: \$1,000,000
 - ✓ Niagara (Town): \$880,000
 - ✓ Niagara County: \$40,590,000
 - ✓ Niagara Falls: \$59,480,000
 - ✓ North Tonawanda: \$3,320,000
 - ✓ Porter: \$720,000
 - ✓ Royalton: \$820,000
 - ✓ Somerset: \$280,000
 - ✓ Tonawanda (City): \$1,620,000
 - ✓ Tonawanda (Town): \$42,410,000
 - ✓ Wheatfield: \$1,980,000
 - ✓ Wilson: \$630,000
 - ✓ **Total for Niagara County municipalities: \$116,910,000**
 - ✓ **Total for Erie and Niagara municipalities: \$774,652,792**

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ACID INDIGESTION?

Fact: At least 90% of those suffering from "Acid Indigestion" and/or "Acid Reflux" are in reality suffering from too little stomach acid.

"How can this be?" you ask. "It feels like too much acid, and the TV commercials tell me it's too much acid."

Here's how it works: When you eat a meal, the stomach is designed to produce strong acid to begin the digestive process, especially of proteins. When there is too little stomach acid, the food sits too long in the stomach undigested, and begins to ferment and rot. **It is the acids of the fermenting and rotting food that cause the feeling of acid indigestion.**

Sufficient stomach acid is also the signal to the small intestine to open up, receive the stomach contents, and begin the next phase of digestion. When this signal is too weak, the stomach contents may try to escape in the other direction, causing the symptoms of acid reflux.

What happens when antacids are taken for this condition? It makes the symptoms stop and the problem worse. Antacids stop the digestive process, and the partially digested, rotting food is forced through the rest of the digestive tract. Also, calcium and most other minerals cannot be absorbed, nor proteins broken down without a strong acid medium in the stomach. Antacids and acid stoppers create an alkaline condition in the stomach. As this condition continues, the digestive tract becomes weaker and weaker and more toxic, which can lead to more serious problems.

There are safe, natural and effective solutions to improve digestive health. Call 754-9039. Rose Chiropractic, P.C. located at 435 Ridge St., Lewiston.

This article is not intended to diagnose, treat or cure any disease or to make any medical claims. It does not supplant competent medical care, or dissuade anyone from seeking competent medical attention for any injury, illness, or other physical condition.