NEW DEMOCRAT COALITION
ECONOMIC POLICY PITCH DAY

<u>Member Ideas Submitted</u>
Members submitted ideas that fall into two general categories: worker benefits and economic growth. The pitch presentations will be ordered by category in alphabetical order by idea name.

Category One: Worker Benefits

1. Portable Retirement and Investment Act – Rep. Jim Himes

The economy is changing- fewer people are spending thirty years at the same desk and retiring with a pension. 401(k)s and other defined contribution plans work for certain segments of the workforce, but those who change jobs often or don't have access to an employer sponsored plan get left behind. The Portable Retirement and Investment Act (PRIA) account would be universal, with one created for each person at birth, and would be totally portable, traveling with a worker from job to job. PRIA investment options would also be simple, providing investment options that satisfy the needs of almost all retirement savers.

2. Saving for the Future Act – Rep. Scott Peters

Americans can't save enough money for retirement or emergencies. One-third of our workforce doesn't have access to a retirement account through work.

The Saving for the Future Act requires all employers to contribute 50 cents per hour workers to employees for their retirement. That equals $20 per week, and over $1,000 per year. With standard contributions, this could generate over $600,000 saved over a lifetime of work.

Employers who already offer retirement benefits don't need to do a thing.

Small businesses with fewer than 100 employees can enroll their employees in federally-backed Universal Private (UP) accounts and receive tax credits for their contributions.

Contractors or self-employed individuals can receive tax credits too!

UP accounts are portable, and the first $2,500 will be set aside in a rainy day fund to pay for emergencies.

3. Skills Investment Act – Rep. Derek Kilmer

Economic change can be enormously disruptive – we've seen technology fundamentally change the nature of some professions, and have seen industries in the United States come and go. It's important that American workers be empowered to navigate economic change, rather than to be victims of it. That's why we need lifelong learning accounts – tax advantaged accounts that mid-career workers can use for educational expenses. The Skills Investment Act of 2019 would create these lifelong learning accounts by expanding Coverdell

Education Savings Accounts so American workers could save money and invest in themselves through skills training, apprenticeships, and professional development. This could be a powerful tool to help workers learn new skills, land new jobs, and earn bigger paychecks.

4. Workforce Development Investment Act – Rep. Annie Kuster

Each year, millions of Americans enroll in community colleges or career and technical (CTE) programs to equip themselves with the skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century economy. Yet there is no guarantee that the training they receive meets the needs of local employers.

The Workforce Development Investment Act provides a $5,000 tax credit for businesses to partner with community colleges and CTE programs to develop curriculum, apprenticeships, and other learning opportunities for students to ensure they graduate ready to fill jobs in their communities. This will help students find employment after graduation and businesses grow.

Category Two: Economic Growth

5. The "Companies Are Responsible Employers" (CARE) Award Act – Rep. Dean Phillips

How does our tax code recognize and reward small businesses for doing right by their employees?

It readily provides opportunities for individuals who want to invest in personal causes and interests, but our tax law does very little to encourage businesses to invest in their greatest asset: their workers.

The CARE Award Act would highlight, promote, and reward those businesses that agree to adopt a growth model that focuses on their workforce and which adhere to standards that we can easily verify. It encourages good business behavior with carrots, not sticks.

Companies of a certain size that agree to take on new responsibilities like a living wage, paid family and medical leave, health insurance, employee ownership and governance, and other benefits would be recognized with an official designation, be eligible for tax and regulatory relief, and could be given preference in contracting with the federal government.

6. End the Threat of Default Act – Rep. Bill Foster

While the debt limit was originally intended to allow Congress to restrain the growth in federal debt outside the budgetary process, in practice it has been used, in the words of Warren Buffet, as a "political weapon of mass destruction". We need a long-term solution to address this issue, but defaulting on U.S. debt payments, which could trigger a massive increase in borrowing costs, tarnish our reputation, create market volatility, and threaten the economic health of the country, is not the way to do that. H.R. 2870 will repeal the debt limit so that Congress can begin an honest, bipartisan conversation about how to reduce the deficit and build a responsible budget.

7. Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Act – Rep. Brad Schneider

Our veterans served our country with honor, and they deserve our support as they transition from military to civilian life. Administered through the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Boots to Business program offers transitioning service members, military spouses, and veterans training on how to start and run a small business. Since its launch in 2013, more than 50,000 service members and spouses have participated in the program. The Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Act of 2019 would authorize this important program to continue under law to help more service members translate the skills learned in the armed forces to entrepreneurial and business success.

8. Combating Economic Inequality through the Federal Reserve – Rep. Denny Heck

The single greatest force reshaping politics and the economy today is income inequality. Its causes are hard to identify, but a major factor — responsible for perhaps more than half the gap — has been monetary policy. Since 1977, Congress has mandated the Federal Reserve pursue "stable prices" and "maximum employment", but in practice the Fed has pursued one goal: lower and lower inflation. Whenever wages threaten to rise, the Fed has hit the brakes and slowed the economy. The result has been 40 years of wage stagnation and now, 10 years of below-target inflation. We need to rebalance the Fed's mandates to reemphasize the importance of economic growth and wage growth. I ask for your assistance in crafting that change.