



To: Interested Parties
From: Future Majority
Date: March 20, 2020
Re: Compact for the American Future - Overview

Once in every generation, an event so unexpected has the ability to shock the nation. From the assassination of a popular president, to divisive wars, to a cultural crescendo after decades of activism, there are moments that both shape and reveal the soul of our country.

The coronavirus pandemic is one of those moments. As the country grapples with the threat of a deadly virus and a devastating economic reality, a spotlight has shone on our preparedness — or lack thereof — as a nation. While the economic and healthcare systems are front and center in this crisis, it's become clear that preparedness across every level of society is no longer part of our DNA. With the coronavirus, our vulnerabilities have been exposed.

Take, for example, the [overloading of the Internet](#) as a surge of Americans began telecommuting for work. Our online infrastructure was not built for a worst-case scenario. Or recall the pandemonium and [shoulder-to-shoulder crowding](#) at airports receiving passengers from abroad as the administration sent mixed messages about travel restrictions. Our infrastructure has not been built for a worst-case scenario.

Or look at the [shortage of vital personal protective equipment](#) for doctors, nurses and first responders on the front lines of saving lives in this pandemic. For a country that spent 3.6 trillion dollars on healthcare last year, it is staggering to think of the breakdowns that would lead to a shortage of masks. And as cases continue to rise, we will likely confront a scenario in which the healthcare system does not have enough [ventilators](#) to treat critical COVID-19 patients.

The federal and state governments have taken important steps to combat the pandemic. But it's clear that we need to move beyond an approach that amounts to little more than shuffling chairs around on a sinking ship. It's time that we build capacity to be prepared — in strong economies and crises alike — for the future. It's time for a **Compact for the American Future**.

Future Majority's research has shown that Americans want freedom and a fair shot to build a good future for themselves and their families. Preparing our country to be a leader across all levels of society — technology, infrastructure, healthcare, education, environment, jobs and the economy, and fair governance — is where the next congressional agenda should be set. Building for the future isn't just compelling messaging; our country will also be stronger for it.

In a new series, the Future Majority team is taking a look at what it means and what it will take to build the American future. In these uncertain times and with the potential for new leadership, this is the conversation that our leaders should be running with. This is the conversation that will matter.