

Voice of the Consumer



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Let's Talk About Infrastructure	2
The Right to Vote	3
The Back Page	4

Learn more about your options:

- FAQs about the [COVID-19 vaccines](#).
- How do I go get a [vaccine](#)?
- New CDC guidance for those [fully-vaxed](#).

The global pandemic we call COVID-19 has now officially been a part of our lives for over a year in the United States; and despite various methods to contain it by state governments, as of this writing, more than **589 thousand deaths** have occurred, and our nation and its economy have basically been shut down.

Naysayers like to claim those deaths are all the "elderly" or those with "underlying conditions," which in a majority of the cases may be true, but think about this: how many of you – or your family members – have those underlying conditions, themselves? Are you ready to go? Are you equipped to lose those closest to you, simply because they have something underlying – like diabetes, or high blood pressure – which has been managed for years? Certainly not.

Thanks to the FDA's fast-tracking the approval of a vaccine if it met specific standards; three drug companies each offering (and getting approval) new vaccine technologies – a two-shot dose from Pfizer, another two-shot dose from Moderna, and a single shot

dose from Johnson & Johnson, we have the tools we need to get us back to our lives.

"What most of us want is a safe return to something that looks more normal," said [Samuel Scarpino](#), who models the coronavirus outbreak at Northeastern University, [to NPR in a story about vaccine refusal](#). "That to me means 80% to 85%, probably, vaccinated."

In order to attain "herd immunity," the majority of our country must get one of these three vaccines.

Two of the vaccines (both Pfizer and Moderna) use something called "messenger RNA" or "mRNA." There has been plenty of suspicion regarding how the vaccines were developed so quickly and even more conspiracy theories running around, stating that this vaccine can actually *change* your DNA. This is simply not true.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [this technology has been around for decades](#). While mRNA has been studied for use with various viruses in the recent past, it was dismissed for a long time (could that reason be that a woman developed it?). More recently, mRNA technology

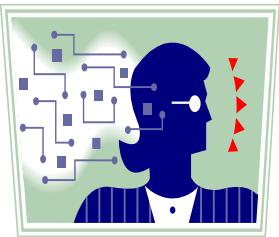
has gained interest, because it can be developed in labs, using "readily available materials." This allows for both standardization and scalability, and proof of this concept has been its prominent COVID-19 use.

Of great issue is the large number of people who refuse to get vaccinated. Whether this is due to some political affinity (which makes no sense, since Trump, Melania, and now even Ivanka, have all been vaccinated); those who think it's a hoax; anti-vax activists; people concerned about harming their bodies; or even those who think it's a way for Bill Gates to implant a tracking device into our bodies (sorry to inform you all, but your online footprint and your phone already do this); the vaccine refusal number is just too damn high.

See VAXXED, p4



LET'S TALK ABOUT INFRASTRUCTURE



[Biden's] investments will use more sustainable and innovative materials, including cleaner steel and cement, and component parts Made in America and shipped on U.S.-flag vessels with American crews under U.S. laws.

-The White House

"While the American Rescue Plan is changing the course of the pandemic and delivering relief for working families, this is no time to build back to the way things were. This is the moment to reimagine and rebuild a new economy. The American Jobs Plan is an investment in America that will create millions of good jobs, rebuild our country's infrastructure, and position the United States to out-compete China. Public domestic investment as a share of the economy has fallen by more than 40 percent since the 1960s. The American Jobs Plan will invest in America in a way we have not invested since we built the interstate highways and won the Space Race."

This is how [the White House starts out its lengthy "Fact Sheet"](#) on the American Jobs Plan, also known as the Infrastructure Plan.

Why wouldn't we want to invest our tax dollars into the infrastructure of our country? We all want and expect our local city

governments to use our local taxes to take care of all the potholes, power and drainage issues, why would we not want and expect to see our federal government invest our money into the same things? Some of our airports are a disaster (I'm looking at you, JFK) and are the first thing overseas travelers see when they arrive in the U.S., and both Europe and the UK put our national railways to absolute shame.

Getting lead out of our water systems, ensuring the stability of our electric grid, modernizing our public transportation systems, and making sure our bridges don't collapse during an earthquake, hurricane, or tornado (much less on any given day), should all be at the top of our priorities for long term investment. It keeps Americans of all ages and walks of life safe - we all deserve that and we all pay for that.

So how in the world did this become a bipartisan issue? Why doesn't everyone want this?

According to the White House Fact Sheet, the U.S. currently sits at 13th place *in the world* when it comes to the quality of our infrastructure. As the wealthiest nation in that same world, this news is a disgrace. We should be putting our wealth to much greater use by focusing on our own people, our own services, including Broadband access, and our own multiple modes of transportation.

It's funny, but the last administration talked **a lot** about "America First" and "Making America Great Again," and now suddenly, this idea of passing steadfast legislation to in fact make the US greater and put it first (instead of 13th) are now up for argument.

This obviously makes no sense and we've fallen to partisan games.

What we need to do is rally around the idea of investing in our infrastructure while establishing millions of jobs and getting our country to a better country overall. ##

KEY TENETS OF THE JOBS PLAN THAT WE SHOULD ALL BE ON BOARD WITH

- Fix highways, rebuild bridges, upgrade ports, airports and transit systems.
- Deliver clean drinking water, a renewed electric grid, and high-speed broadband to all Americans.
- Build, preserve, and retrofit more than two million homes and commercial buildings, modernize our nation's schools and childcare facilities, and upgrade veterans' hospitals and federal buildings.
- Solidify the infrastructure of our care economy by creating jobs and raising wages and benefits for essential home care workers.
- Revitalize manufacturing, secure U.S. supply chains, invest in R&D, and train Americans for the jobs of the future.
- Create good-quality jobs that pay prevailing wages in safe and healthy workplaces while ensuring workers have a free and fair choice to organize, join a union, and bargain collectively with their employers. ##

What's Behind the Push to Make Voting More Difficult in America?

The 2020 presidential election not only generated a historic turnout, but also hundreds of baseless claims of massive voter fraud. While most claims were promoted by disgruntled Trump supporters and conspiracy theorists, the facts tell a much different story.

According to *USA Today*, there are over 234 million Americans who are registered to vote. On November 6, 2020, Donald Trump received approximately 74 million votes. Joe Biden received approximately 81 million votes, making him the clear popular vote winner by 7 million votes. Biden also captured 306 electoral votes to Trump's 270 electoral votes, which sealed his election as the 46th President of the United States in accordance with the Constitution.

According to reports from the Secretary of State's offices in those handful of states where claims of voter fraud were voiced by pro-Trump supporters, there was "no credible evidence of any voter fraud..." Statements to this effect were made by both Republican and Democratic Secretaries of State from Georgia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan and Texas — states hotly contested by Donald Trump's lawyers, who tried unsuccessfully to appeal the vote count results.

Since election day 2020, there has been a flurry of legislation — both proposed and adopted — by several Republican-led state legislatures and governors, to

roll back one of America's most basic rights: the right to vote. This effort is morally wrong and defies everything good for which America stands for.

So, what's behind the push by mostly Republican-led state legislatures and Republican governors to suppress our right to vote? Frankly, it's a case of "sour grapes" among the losers, and the fact that changing demographics are resulting in more voters supporting the Democratic Party's presidential nominee, rather than the Republican Party nominee. This was the simple case in 2020.

In every election there will be winners and losers. That's a fact! But, for the Republican Party to suppress the rights of Americans to vote — regardless of a voter's party affiliation — is just plain wrong. It sends a very negative message from the Republican Party to all Americans that basically says, "Hey, if we can't win fair-and-square, we're going to change the rules and make it very difficult for many Americans to vote."

And, let's call a spade a spade. What we're talking about is suppressing the rights of people of color and lower income Americans who do not have easy access to voting polls and need the option to vote by absentee mail.

So, this brazen, un-American move by Republican legislators to suppress the rights of millions of American minority voters is both racist and wrong. Elected officials

who are promoting and supporting the suppression of voting rights need to be identified publicly and held accountable for trying to undermine a basic American right — the right to exercise our free speech by voting.

Now is the time for all Americans, regardless of one's political views, to stand shoulder to shoulder and fight against this Republican Party-led voter suppression movement.

As an organization that fights for the rights of all American consumers, the American Consumer Council opposes the effort to make voting more difficult for our citizens. Instead, we think state legislators should be removing as many barriers as possible to increase voter participation.

Without the involvement of voters, democracy will die. As Thomas Jefferson said, "We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate." ##

"This effort is morally wrong and defies everything good for which America stands for."

Want to respond to any of our "Voice" commentaries? Write us at [info@americanconsumercouncil.org!](mailto:info@americanconsumercouncil.org)



ACC

11251 RANCHO
CARMEL DRIVE
#503016

SAN DIEGO, CA
92150-3016

Phone:
(800) 544-0414

E-mail / WEB
address

INFO@AMERICAN
CONSUMERCOUNCIL.
ORG

**VAXXED, cont'**

Regular citizens, our military, certain members of congress and even health care workers are still refusing to take the vaccine, and it is for all the reasons listed above. We need to find a way to convince ourselves and our family and friends to get the vaccine.

As of May 25, [Becker Hospital Review reported](#) that 130,615,797 or 39.3 percent of the country was fully vaccinated, according to CDC data, and the site lists all states, ranked in order of the percentage of their population vaccinated. Maine is identified as the state having the highest percentage of its population fully vaccinated. Alaska, however, is still seeing deaths in patients who have been given the option to vaccinate. In Anchorage, Dr. Barbara Creighton has seen three of her unvaccinated

patients – who each had access to the vaccine – die in the last week (one only 20 years old).

"It's just heartbreaking ... but it is a personal choice," Creighton said. "We do all we can to educate them and then we have to step back and respect their choice. That's all we can do."

In California, residents aged 12 and over can now get "jabbed" (and are doing so in droves) and children throughout the state will soon be back in their classrooms. Yet, the state is only 50 percent vaccinated.

Then in Texas, where the governor has pretended the virus does not exist, their death toll continues to climb and hit 50,000 earlier this week.

We all need to do better. The CDC recently [dropped mask mandates](#) outdoors and in for those fully vaccinated - except in

cases of large gatherings - leaving those decisions up to venue owners.

Now there is talk that booster shots may be needed – which isn't a surprise, really; just like the flu, COVID-19 has mutations that will require alternative strands of immunization. If we all get on board, we'll get through so much quicker.

Things are getting back to normal in a sense, but there is still a huge percentage of our nation who refuse to get vaccinated. Many of those entertainment and sports venues are now requiring proof of vaccination or of a recent negative test. It is so much easier for everyone to just get vaccinated. Life will once again become routine.

As arguably one of the longest running and most lucrative marketing campaigns ever says –

Just Do It. ##

About Our Organization...

The American Consumer Council (ACC) is a nonprofit consumer education organization, founded in 1987, to educate consumers on how to purchase safe, reliable products and services. For over 30 years, ACC has championed the rights of consumers and battled unscrupulous business practices to defend the rights of the American consumer. ACC provides

many services to its membership, including: consumer advocacy, sponsorship of financial education programs, and the administration of two awards for businesses within the industry that adhere to the highest standards for environmental compliance, sustainability, and corporate social responsibility. In

times, consumers want to do business with companies they trust. ACC helps consumers make better financial decisions and do business with reliable corporations that are committed to protecting our environment and preserving our natural resources. Visit ACC's website below to learn more and become a member today. ##

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