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2019 also brought sadness as we mourned the death of our dear friend, Herbert Sandler. Herb lived a full life of 88 years and left a tremendous impact both at CAP and the entire progressive movement. His legacy lives on with us and continues to support our work.

As we look ahead, we thank you for your past support and invite you to move forward with us in the fight to improve the lives of all Americans, through bold, progressive ideas.

All my best,

Neera Tanden
President and CEO

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President and CEO
WITH 20 POLICY TEAMS SITUATED WITHIN CAP, we are confronting the most pressing issues in the United States and the world every day—from national security to economic growth to the climate crisis and making health care affordable and accessible to all Americans. This year, CAP also added a Technology Policy team to delve into the multifaceted issues that are part of an ever-changing 21st century.

One of our organization’s greatest strengths is our capacity to produce interdisciplinary solutions, the result of having experts across various teams collaborating to ensure our ideas are not just bold and progressive, but also inclusive, equitable, and representative of the communities most affected. This year, cross-team initiatives between criminal justice and gun violence prevention; race and ethnicity and education; democracy and disability justice; and so many others pushed the envelope on what is possible within progressive politics and advanced our overarching objectives.

CAP POLICY TEAMS:

- Criminal Justice Reform
- Democracy and Government Reform
- Disability Justice Initiative
- Economic Policy
- Early Childhood
- Education, K-12
- Education, Postsecondary
- Energy and Environment
- Gun Violence Prevention
- Health Policy
- Immigration Policy
- LGBTQ Rights
- National Security and International Policy
- Politics & Elections
- Poverty to Prosperity
- Race and Ethnicity Policy
- Religion and Values
- State and Local Government Affairs
- Technology Policy
- Women’s Initiative

OUR MISSION

The Center for American Progress is an independent nonpartisan policy institute that is dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans, through bold, progressive ideas as well as strong leadership and concerted action. Our aim is not just to change the conversation, but also to change the country.

OUR VALUES

As progressives, we believe America should be a land of boundless opportunity, where people can climb the ladder of economic mobility. We believe we owe it to future generations to protect the planet and promote peace and shared global prosperity. And we believe an effective government can earn the trust of the American people, champion the common good over narrow self-interest, and harness the strength of our diversity.

OUR APPROACH

We develop new policy ideas, challenge the media to cover the issues that truly matter, and shape the national debate. With policy teams in 20 major issue areas, CAP can think creatively at the cross section of traditional boundaries to develop ideas for policymakers that lead to real change. By employing an extensive communications and outreach effort that we adapt to a rapidly changing media landscape, we move ideas aggressively in the national policy debate.
Ensure America is a land where all people can climb the ladder of economic opportunity

America faced a paradox throughout 2019: The economy boasted broadly positive economic numbers while most Americans still felt crushed between increasing costs and stagnant middle incomes. This past year, CAP articulated America’s economic challenges and outlined solutions to ensure individual opportunity—particularly for those who have long been overlooked—while improving our national financial system. Many of our initiatives support economic mobility—from child care, education, and food deserts to gun violence prevention, work-family policies, and many more.

**Jobs plan** | The United States faces a widening chasm in outlook and opportunity. The wealthiest Americans have captured the lion’s share of economic returns, and college-educated Americans have largely continued to prosper in the 21st century. But for millions of American workers—and particularly those without a four-year college degree—powerful forces have exerted downward pressure on employment and wage growth, job quality, and opportunity. Long-standing inequities have further exacerbated this decline.

Building on CAP’s 2018’s jobs plan, we built out a series of reports to expand the core ideas, creating a roadmap for policy—and jobs—development. Among them, “Reducing Carbon Pollution Through Infrastructure” outlined how decarbonizing the economy would create millions of jobs and spur a new industrial supply chain in many hard-hit communities. As a follow-up, “Infrastructure Investment Must Create Good Jobs for All,” offered detailed guidance to ensure jobs created through infrastructure investment pay fair wages, provide good benefits, and elevate employee voices on the job. Most importantly, the plan offers American workers from all walks of life a pathway to the middle class.

CAP also worked closely with Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand’s (D-NY) office, which then included these job quality and equity considerations into the Build Local, Hire Local Act.
Medicare Extra

CAP developed "Medicare Extra: Universal Coverage for Less Than $3 Trillion and Lower Health Care Costs for All," a detailed plan to provide universal coverage while maintaining choice and affordability for all Americans, regardless of income, health status, age, or insurance status. Employers would have the option to sponsor Medicare Extra, and employees would have the option to choose Medicare Extra over their employer coverage. Medicare Extra would also strengthen, streamline, and integrate Medicaid coverage with guaranteed quality into a national program. Medicare Extra demonstrates yet again why CAP is a leading voice in the progressive sphere combating racial disparities in infant and maternal health. Such framework, along with interactive pieces like “Opportunities for States to Improve Infant Health Outcomes,” has once again elevated the national conversation around maternal and infant health, including on the political debate stage. The country’s infant health crisis disproportionately affects communities of color. Research like this not only brings attention to the issue, but also rallies lawmakers, program leaders, and advocates at all levels to change this pattern.

Racial wealth gap | As progressives, CAP envisions an America where people of color can fully participate in our economic, social, and civic systems. An individual’s racial or ethnic background should not limit their economic success or civic engagement. With this, CAP is committed to a progressive agenda that empowers people of color and ethnic minorities in education, employment, and at the ballot box.

Our strategy focuses on eliminating the racial wealth gap and opposing systemic racism in housing, democracy, and economic opportunity. CAP’s racial wealth gap report was featured prominently in the media, including its detailed and engaging social media resources that extended its reach.

In addition to the wealth gap series, CAP also launched and convened a National Advisory Council on Eliminating the Black-White Wealth Gap. As progressives, CAP continues to resist systematic racism and the entrenched regressive policies that reinforce it. CAP uses our strengths as a multi-issue think tank to embolden and center communities of color and focus on pathways to economic success.
There has never been greater urgency to mitigate the dangerous effects of climate change, protect our planet, and create a world where everyone can prosper and thrive.

CAP’s interdisciplinary approach—especially within the environmental movement, foreign relations, and domestic economic policy—took real steps to ensure the safety and health of our planet.

**Leveraging momentum on climate action**

In 2019, CAP published two landmark reports to mitigate the climate crisis and advance a clean future. First, our report “*How Much Nature Should America Keep?*” outlines the steps that must be taken to protect 30 percent of U.S. lands and oceans by 2030. This goal would help both slow the rapid loss of wildlife and natural area in the United States and help the country combat climate change. This report has received widespread support in the environmental community and has proven influential in both Congress and in the presidential race. Members of both the House and Senate introduced resolutions to set “30X30” as a national goal, and many presidential candidates have endorsed 30x30.

Then, CAP released its *100 Percent Clean Future plan*, which lays out a clear framework on how to build a net-zero economy by 2050. The report and accompanying fact sheets and interactive detail strategies to tackle our planet’s climate crisis. This comprehensive report serves as the basis for House legislators and for a future administration. CAP and our partners in this space also hosted convenings across the country to create the historic Equitable and Just National Climate Platform, which unified large environmental organizations and environmental justice leaders around a vision for equitable and inclusive climate action. The platform is now housed at [AJustClimate.org](http://AJustClimate.org) and since June 2018, more than 200 groups have signed on in support.
Offering a new strategy on China

Understanding that the U.S.-China relationship is the key international competition of the 21st century, CAP published “Limit, Leverage, and Compete: A New Strategy on China.” The report offered a comprehensive new China strategy that is an alternative to the administration’s transactional approach. It outlines a strategy—both domestic and international—for the United States to compete and win in the 21st century. We must invest in the fundamental drivers of economic prosperity and national security—public education, infrastructure, innovation, and research and development. Instead of acting unilaterally, the United States must reach out multilaterally to lead and build a united front with allies and partners.

With those core fundamentals in place, the United States can execute a strategy that limits China’s ability to exploit its openness; leverages China to contribute its growing capabilities in ways that benefit the global common good; and positions the United States to compete more comprehensively over the long term. The goal of this strategy is straightforward: Advance the country’s national interests and put the United States in the best possible strategic position regardless of how China acts.
Democracy and government

Every day, CAP aims to reform the rules of democracy across all branches of government to ensure it is responsive and accountable to all Americans. Progressive values require that judges and courts are representative of their communities; that elections are determined by the people not bank accounts; and that gerrymandering—which disenfranchises millions of Americans with lasting consequences—is eliminated.

This year, CAP highlighted the pervasive corruption throughout our system, starting with the need for sweeping ethics reform that voters have been calling for. (According to a Politico/Morning Consult poll, immediately prior to the 2018 midterm elections, 77 percent of voters said passing an anti-corruption bill to “rein in the influence of money and lobbying in Washington” was a top or important priority.)

Throughout 2019, we published dozens of reports about systematic corruption, including “How Partisan Gerrymandering Prevents Legislative Action on Gun Violence,”18 “How Big Pharma Reaps Profits While Hurting Everyday Americans,”19 and “Predatory For-Profit Colleges Benefit From Washington’s Culture of Corruption,”20 effectively making the case that structural reform must be a top priority for a progressive agenda.

CAP is committed to supporting a government that earns the trust of the American people, champions the common good over narrow self-interest, and harnesses the strength of our diversity.

An effective government that works for all
Securing protections for immigrants
The first three years of the current administration have been defined by its anti-immigrant agenda, including both bending and outright breaking the law to strip protections from Dreamers and those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS); dismantling the refugee and asylum systems; creating roadblocks to legal migration; and supercharging an unnecessarily cruel and unfair immigration enforcement system. CAP has an important role in advocating for immigration protections and refugee rights through research and advocacy. We continue to build the case for granting permanent protection to Dreamers and TPS holders, particularly through our advocacy for H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act, which passed the House of Representatives with bi-partisan support last year.

In 2019, CAP continued to challenge the vilification of immigrants and refugees while building support for progressive policies and constructing a narrative and analytical framework centered on restoring the rule of law in immigration policy. CAP produced “Restoring the Rule of Law Through a Fair, Humane, and Workable Immigration System,” a widely shared report promoting the idea that we need to build a system that people believe can be followed and should be enforced in a fair and just way. CAP has also played an integral role in the fight to save DACA and in highlighting the impact of immigrants and refugees in rural America.

Promoting LGBTQ+ equality
CAP has long led the movement to guarantee civil rights for LGBTQ people at the federal and state levels. We have partnered with leaders in the faith community to challenge the weaponization of religion against the LGBTQ community. CAP also led a broad coalition of groups that secured more than 132,000 public comments in favor of retaining the clear and strong protections for minorities—including LGBTQ people—including in Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act. While public comment campaigns may not inherently block rollbacks, they engender swift and severe public condemnation and unify the progressive voice. CAP’s LGBTQ work includes the role of education and the Department of Education that removed protections for transgender students.

In our 2019 report “Secretary DeVos Is Failing to Protect the Civil Rights of LGBTQ Students,” CAP analyzed how the Education Department has changed since 2016 and provided recommendations to protect all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.
CAP’s impact on state and local issues

In 2019, CAP worked with a host of progressive governors, state legislators, and mayors who were elected throughout the country the previous year. Together, we advanced criminal justice reforms and worker protections, having an important impact at the state and local levels.

Expanding the Clean Slate Initiative | In 2019, we saw measurable results from CAP’s 2018 Clean Slate conference, campaign launch, and toolkit rollout as states began implementing this bold policy model. Clean Slate states automatically seal or expunge qualifying criminal records for people who remain crime-free for a set period of time. Nationwide, between 70 million and 100 million Americans—or 1 in 3—have some kind of criminal record, and the implications affect ability to secure housing, employment, and education. Pennsylvania was the first state to enact Clean Slate legislation in 2018, followed by Utah in March 2019. CAP played an active role in advancing the bill through Michigan’s House with bipartisan support, and we continue to set our sights on expanding the legislation across the country.

Overtime executive orders Expanding overtime protection for hourly workers remains a priority issue for CAP. Throughout 2019, we worked with a variety of partners, including NELP, EPI, SiX, AFT, AFL-CIO, CPD, and other progressive state allies to develop a coordinated campaign around economic justice issues. In many states, the governor has executive authority to provide overtime protections to workers in their state. In fact, Govs. Gretchen Whitmer (D-MI) and Jared Polis (D-CO) both announced large expansions in their states. We continue to advise other governors around the country about potential actions they can take to increase worker pay in their states as we reach for a diverse, inclusive, healthier, safer, and more resilient America.
With new, strong leaders in Congress and statehouses across the country, legislation on political reform, health care, voting rights, and economic opportunity quickly took center stage at CAP’s annual Ideas Conference in 2019.
CAP’s legislative impact

The 2018 leadership change in the U.S. House of Representatives created exciting opportunities for progressive action. CAP leverages its deep policy expertise, relationships with progressive policymakers, and strategic communications savvy and talent to drive policy success at the state and local levels. CAP hands off policy ideas and solutions to elected officials, works with staff to implement change, and highlights innovation at the state and local levels. Unfortunately, each of the following initiatives remains unheard on the Senate floor, but CAP remains steadfast in our commitment and action to move these and other progressive ideas forward. Highlights of CAP’s 2019 legislative impact include:

H.R. 1 The For the People Act

We believe that to make the political system more responsive to the needs of everyday people—and to create the conditions for the progressive polices we support to be viable—we need fundamental structural change. The most sweeping anti-corruption and pro-voter legislation brought before Congress since the post-Watergate era of the 1970s is a once-in-a-generation package of reforms that became a referendum on the broken system that has helped produce one of the most scandal-ridden political eras in modern history. H.R. 1 was made possible in part by the years of organizing and policy development that CAP and our partners have poured into democracy reform, where we are a venerable organizational leader.

H.R. 1 finally went to a vote in 2019 and passed 234-193.
The Paycheck Fairness Act
CAP has been an outspoken proponent of equal pay since 2004 and has played a major role in partnering with others to support the introduction of the 2019 legislation. Following the 2018 midterms, CAP built on our earlier initiatives to create a drumbeat for the passage of a bill in this current Congress. CAP joined with advocates to support lawmakers during the introduction of the bill, and we participated in a briefing for House staff on the bill’s various provisions. After introduction, we worked closely with committee staff to plan and design the February hearing on H.R. 7. We later provided real-time technical assistance during mark-up in response to amendments.
H.R. 7 passed the House with a bipartisan vote when seven Republicans joined with unanimous Democratic support.

The American Dream and Promise Act of 2019
CAP used the run-up to the 116th Congress to build alignment on and off the Hill to prioritize a single piece of legislation providing permanent protections for Dreamers, people with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED). Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) made passing the Dream Act and protecting those with TPS a key caucus priority, and over the coming months, CAP produced a series of calls, briefings, convenings, letters, independent research and data gathering, fact sheets, videos, and so much more. Democratic leadership repeatedly disseminated our data and analysis to the caucus, and members of Congress cited our research in their remarks in committee and on the floor, as well as in op-eds and social media posts. Altogether, our DACA products have been viewed more than 170,000 times over the past year.
This bill passed by a wide margin, 237-187, and with unanimous Democratic support.

The Raise the Wage Act
Following a decade of advocacy and research on the importance of increasing the minimum wage since it reached $7.25 in 2009, in 2019, CAP provided critical strategic support in getting the Raise the Wage Act over the finish line. CAP was a prominent player in anticipating, navigating, and mitigating obstacles to passage. These included a Congressional Budget Office score released just 10 days before the vote and the minority’s threat of poison pill amendments to ensure the bill’s defeat. In both offense and defense, CAP nimbly organized coalition partners, crafted messaging, recommended strategic timing of responses and initiatives, and created shared content for several months while maintaining focus on a moving goal post.
We persisted through the fight, and after several months of uncertainty about the bill’s viability, it passed 231-199.
The Equality Act

Beginning with a 2014 report, “We the People,”27 and a meeting with Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), CAP has been championing this comprehensive nondiscrimination legislation for LGBTQ people, which has become the centerpiece of the LGBTQ civil rights agenda. CAP’s original research and policy ideas; storytelling; leadership within LGBTQ and progressive coalitions; and strong relationships with members of Congress and other elected leaders are all key drivers. In fact, at the bill’s introductory press conference, Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI) recognized CAP’s leadership in shaping this landmark legislation.

In 2019, CAP worked with our partners to finalize the legislation and secure the largest number of sponsors the bill has ever had. We directly engaged with Sen. Susan Collins’ (R-ME) office to secure her endorsement and make the bill bipartisan in both chambers. We co-chaired the Equality Act Task Force of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and co-led the Faith Working Group alongside the Religious Institute. Those efforts resulted in historic endorsements by civil rights and faith partners, including the NAACP, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and 70 faith-based organizations.

CAP’s diligence continued as the legislation moved through the House, passing with a vote of 236-173, with the bipartisan support of eight Republican members.

Bipartisan Background Checks Act / Disarm Hate Act

Working with others in 2018, CAP shifted the gun violence prevention conversation about background checks away from the 2013 Manchin-Toomey compromise and toward a more comprehensive universal approach, as reflected in the language of HR 8. At the start of the 116th Congress, we were present and thanked by name at the bill introduction, featuring a statement by former Rep. and gun violence survivor Gabby Giffords. CAP subsequently released a video featuring gun violence survivors calling on Congress to take action to address the issue. As of December 2019, this video garnered more than 250,000 impressions on social media.

CAP also played a crucial role in supporting the Disarm Hate Act, which prohibits individuals convicted of misdemeanor-level hate crimes from buying or possessing guns. The Disarm Hate Act is an original CAP idea, which arose out of the hate-motivated shooting of worshippers at a historically African American church in Charleston, South Carolina in 2015 and gained new traction following the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando in 2016. Our policy idea was quickly adapted into legislation that was introduced in Congress by Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI) and Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA). The Disarm Hate Act was advanced out of the House Judiciary Committee in September 2019.

The Climate Change Now Act

As co-chair of the Climate Action Coalition, CAP helped provide guidance to House leadership, key House Committee staff, and partners about the need for ambitious policy action early in the new Congress. CAP helped develop several policy options and refine them into legislation in the Climate Change Now Act. After meeting with Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s office and key House members, CAP joined more than 700 mayors, local officials, businesses, faith groups, public health organizations, tribal leaders, and environmental groups to send a letter calling on the House to pursue and act on an ambitious climate agenda in the absence of federal leadership.

H.R. 9 earned 224 co-sponsors and passed the House 231-190, with three Republican members joining a united Democratic caucus.
CAP by the Numbers*

CAP is a leader in the progressive movement with 94% of our $49.7 million 2019 budget funded by generous individuals and foundations passionate about moving the country forward.

With strong financial management, we invested 88% directly into programmatic work, and held administrative and fundraising expenses to 12%.

**Revenue**

1. Individuals: **45%**
2. Foundations: **49%**
3. Corporate and labor: **3%**
4. Other: **3%**

For a listing of our 2019 donors and funders, please visit americanprogress.org/oursupporters.

*Unaudited

From the University of Pennsylvania's Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program’s annual “Global Go To Think Tank Index” report:

- CAP ranks #7 in “Top Think Tanks in the U.S.”
- In the international ranking, CAP moved up to #11 in “Top Think Tanks in the World (U.S. and non-U.S.)”
- CAP moved up three slots to #3 in the world for “Best New Idea or Paradigm Developed by a Think Tank.”
- CAP is #2 in the world for “Best Use of the Internet” and #4 in the world for “Best Advocacy Campaign.”

- CAP moved up two spots to #5 for social policy; moved up one spot to #7 for domestic economic policy; moved up one spot to #10 for health policy; and stayed at #12 for foreign policy and international affairs.
- CAP is #10 in the world for best use of media and #5 for best use of social media.

In 2019, CAP received our fourth consecutive four-star rating from Charity Navigator. This is the highest possible rating that a nonprofit can receive.

Honoring Sally Hart

This year, we are grateful to have received support from Sally Hart of Chevy Chase, Maryland, who passed away in 2018. After nearly a decade of contributing to CAP and CAP Action, Ms. Hart included us in her estate plans. We are able to continue moving bold, progressive ideas forward and improve the lives of all Americans.

For more information about planned giving, please contact us. donate@americanprogress.org or 202-481-8185
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* As of December 31, 2019
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