

## Unemployed workers face hardship, desperation as benefits run out



By Blake Skylar

**W**hen two vital programs expired on Sept. 6, millions of jobless Americans lost their unemployment benefits, leaving them vulnerable to the financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic, as well as natural disasters like the flooding that ravaged New York City and the wildfires in the Western states. At least 8.9 million U.S. citizens have been stripped of these benefits, with no solution or reprieve in sight.

As the Delta surge and now also the appearance of the Mu variant of COVID-19 impact the fragile pandemic recovery, the abrupt end of aid to Americans comes as a serious blow, denying them access to two essential programs. The first of them gave jobless assistance to self-employed and gig workers, while the second supported those who have been without jobs for more than six months. Salt in their wounds is what those receiving regular unemployment benefits from the states also got on Sept. 6 as they saw the end to the \$300 federal supplement to their checks.

Though the White House has attempted to motivate states to continue paying the \$300 weekly benefit by using money from stimulus legislation, no states have chosen to do so; many even elected to opt out of the federal program early after some businesses claimed they couldn't find enough people to hire. Data has proven that removing

unemployment aid early in those states has had only minimal economic benefits. Such states have experienced little to no hiring relative to the rest of the U.S.

Andrew Stettner, senior fellow at the Century Foundation, noted that he had attended some Capitol Hill meetings on unemployment insurance and found that the prevailing mentality is that "there is a feeling that it took all the political attention and now Congress needs to work on other things."

### T H I S W E E K :

- **Workers face hardship, desperation as benefits run out**
- **New York City council staffers unionize**
- **Nearly 1 million people killed in 20 years of US 'war on terror' – report**
- **Los trabajadores de GM luchan por el convenio colectivo**
- **Myanmar opposition calls for attack on military**

READ MORE NEWS AND OPINION DAILY AT [WWW.PEOPLESWORLD.ORG](http://WWW.PEOPLESWORLD.ORG)

By contrast, he added, "The end of the pandemic will be an abrupt jolt to millions of Americans who won't find a job in time for this arbitrary end to assistance."

Rep. Jamaal Bowman, D-NY., urged President Biden to revive the federal pandemic-oriented

**Sudden end to aid can cause great damage to the entire economy as the recovery is jolted by a surge in the Delta variant of the coronavirus.**

unemployment benefits, stating, “We need to expand the UI for millions of unemployed workers because this crisis isn’t over. People are not only dealing with COVID surges, they’re dealing with impacts of climate change, from extreme flooding in my district to heat waves and fires in the West.” Bowman, a Black Lives Matter activist, is serving his term in Congress and has already made his mark as a leading progressive in the Democratic caucus.

The removal of benefits comes at a time when the nation has 5.7 million fewer jobs than it did pre-pandemic, and when Americans are still financially crippled with only sparse access to social assistance programs, such as food stamps/SNAP benefits, for which the White House approved a 25 percent increase last month. It will remain one of the few lifelines for 42.7 million U.S. citizens for the foreseeable future.

Meanwhile, more Americans must contend with the prospect of homelessness now that the federal eviction moratorium has expired, though some

Democratic-controlled states such as California, New York, Washington, Illinois, and Minnesota are offering extensions on theirs. For many working class people, however, both SNAP and that very moratorium were keeping them afloat; in the wake of the dissolution of the latter, many will suffer.

One such person at risk is Mary Taboniar, a housekeeper at the Hilton Hawaiian Village resort in Honolulu, a single mother of two who depended entirely upon pandemic-boosted unemployment benefits and local foodbanks, after an obvious dip in tourism during the COVID outbreak affected her work hours and wages, and thus her livelihood. “It’s really scaring me,” she remarked in an interview with KTLA. “How can I pay my rent if I don’t have unemployment and my job isn’t back?” Right now, she said, “I’m just grasping for anything.”

---

## **New York City council staffers unionize**

**By Mark Gruenberg**

**S**ome 356 New York City Council staffers are now union members, joining 21 financial analysts who previously unionized, their union, the Association of Legislative Employees, announced.

The combined total of 377 members makes ALE, which will be an independent union, the largest union of legislative staffers in the U.S., the organizing committee said.

Their union also follows a recent trend among workers in legislative and political offices. Staffers at several Democratic presidential campaigns, notably Sen. Bernie Sanders’ workers, unionized last year. This year, staffers of at least one legislature, Oregon, did so. All those efforts came through voluntary recognition.

Indeed, in the Big Apple, this 21-month organizing drive was characterized by more than just voluntary recognition. Instead, by January, it had outright support from 28 of the council’s 51 members. It also had wide support from other Big Apple unions, including one which represents workers at the city’s Office of Public Advocate.

Ordinarily, legislative staffers for politicians—including members of Congress—are “at will” employees, whose salaries can vary wildly and who are subject to their bosses’ whims. The same non-standards apply to political campaign workers, too.

Whims, pay and working conditions were keys in this drive. One “whim” was far more than that: Former council member Andy King’s repeatedly intimidated and punished staffers to prevent them from testifying about his sexual harassment. King was later expelled. And staff noticed when council members gave themselves a \$36,000 yearly raise in 2016, to \$148,500.

Following the voluntary recognition by their bosses—the council members—the ALE will draw up a constitution, set bargaining aims and elect a bargaining committee, organizers said.

**Some 356 staffers and 21 financial analysts are part of the Association of Legislative Employees.**

# Nearly 1 million people killed in 20 years of US ‘war on terror’ – report



By Steve Sweeney

**T**he U.S. war on terror has killed almost one million people across the world and cost the country some \$8 trillion over the past 20 years, according to a new report.

The Costs of War Project by Brown University estimated that between 897,000 and 929,000 people have lost their lives as a direct result of war in more than 80 countries.

The study, published yesterday, examined spending on U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Syria.

Of the \$8 trillion, \$2.3 trillion is attributed to the Afghanistan-Pakistan war zone, which has seen the Taliban return to power in Kabul after 20 years of U.S.-led war and occupation.

“The war has been long and complex and horrific and unsuccessful,” said joint author of the report Catherine Lutz.

Cost of War Project co-founder Neta Crawford noted that the fatalities recorded were a conservative estimate as they did not include indirect those caused by disease, displacement, and loss of access to food or clean drinking water.

“The deaths we tallied are likely a vast undercount of the true toll these wars have taken on human life,” she said.

Researcher Stephanie Savell said: “Twenty years from now, we’ll still be reckoning with the high societal costs of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, long after U.S. forces are gone.”

U.S. President Joe Biden has come under intense pressure following the botched withdrawal from Afghanistan, which ended on Monday as the Taliban declared “full independence.”

United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres has expressed “grave concern at the deepening humanitarian and economic crisis in the country and the threat of basic services collapsing completely.

“Today, almost half of the population of Afghanistan, 18 million people, need humanitarian assistance to survive,” he said on Monday.

In a nationwide address on Tuesday, Mr. Biden pledged that the U.S. would “continue to support the Afghan people” through diplomacy, international influence, and humanitarian aid.

But he remained tight-lipped over a drone strike he authorized that wiped out 10 members of one Afghan family, including six children.

Washington has been derided for claiming that it does more than any other country to protect civilians during military operations.

According to Save the Children, nearly 33,000 youngsters were killed or maimed during the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan, not including those who died from hunger and disease.

“What remains after 20 years is a generation of children whose entire lives have been blighted by the misery and impact of war,” it said on Monday.

“The magnitude of human suffering of the past two decades is beyond comprehension.”

**he U.S. war on terror has killed almost one million people across the world and cost the country some \$8 trillion over the past 20 years, according to a new report.**

## Myanmar opposition calls for attacks on military

By Morning Star

**M**yanmar's parallel government called for an uprising against the military junta Wednesday, urging ethnic groups to "immediately attack" the armed forces.

Duwa Lashi La, acting president of the National Unity Government, formed by parliamentarians ousted in February 1 coup, issued the rallying cry for a "revolution" against the regime in a video message.

He called for "a people's defensive war against the military junta" and for soldiers and civilians to join the Defence Forces.

He demanded military-appointed bureaucrats resign from the government and called on the country's border guards and soldiers to "join with the people and attack the people's enemy."

Myanmar has been plagued by instability with protests and strike action across the country demanding a return to democracy.

The military has led a brutal crackdown, opening fire on peaceful protests.

More than 1,000 people have been killed since the country's armed forces seized power according the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners monitoring group.

Many thousands in Myanmar have been displaced, jailed or disappeared as the military defies global calls for a return to democracy.

It insists that it was forced to take charge of the country, citing unfounded allegations of election fraud in November's poll which was won by Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) in a landslide.

She is under house arrest and, along with other leading figures in the NLD, faces a number of charges including bribery and corruption.

## Los trabajadores de GM luchan por el convenio colectivo

By Industriall

**T**ras el histórico triunfo del NO, en la consulta de legitimación del CCT realizada el 17 y 18 de agosto, con el que se rechazó el contrato manejado de manera corrupta e ilegal por el sindicato "Miguel Trujillo" de la Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM), surge una organización sindical independiente, alternativa y legítima impulsada por el colectivo "Generando Moviendo", agrupación que desde hace dos años enfrenta las represalias de la empresa y que está integrada por trabajadores y ex trabajadores de la GM Silao.

El comité ejecutivo de la nueva organización está conformado por trabajadores activos de las distintas ramas de producción para avanzar en la consolidación de una organización representativa y dispuesta al diálogo con la empresa para garantizar los derechos laborales de los trabajadores.

María Alejandra Morales, secretaria general del SINTTIA y trabajadora activa de General Motors, con 11 años de antigüedad en la empresa, comunicó en conferencia de prensa que el nuevo sindicato cuenta con registro legal y toma de nota o registro sindical otorgado por la Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social.

Morales expresó: "Por fin se alzó la voz y los trabajadores están unidos para defender sus derechos y abatir a la CTM, sindicato actual que no los defiende ni laboralmente ni los ayuda a conseguir mejores prestaciones".

Por otro lado, la asesora legal del SINTTIA, Patricia Juan Pineda, aseguró que el próximo 17 de setiembre la STPS declarará nulo el CCT que detentaba la CTM, tras lo cual

el SINTTIA comenzará las gestiones pertinentes para alcanzar la titularidad del CCT y emplazaría a huelga a GM para solicitar la firma del nuevo contrato entre las partes.

Según aclara Pineda:

"El emplazamiento a huelga no significa que se estalle la huelga, el plazo del emplazamiento se definirá, pero se dará suficiente tiempo para las pláticas con la empresa, habrá un espacio amplio".

Por su parte, el secretario regional de IndustriALL, Marino Vani, expresó:

"Excelente decisión de los trabajadores. El respeto y la dignidad en el trabajo se logra con unidad y acción de los trabajadores y el respaldo de las bases a sus dirigentes. Las empresas nos respetan cuando nos hacemos respetar. SINTTIA es el camino para la dignidad laboral, solo la lucha organizada genera movimiento y el contrato colectivo que ustedes lo merecen".