



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Interested Parties

**FROM:** DNC War Room

**DATE:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020

**RE:** Trump's Descent

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Five years ago, Donald Trump descended into the basement of Trump Tower and launched his campaign for president. He's been dragging America down with him ever since.

The very first words of his campaign were a lie: "Wow. Woah. That is some group of people. Thousands!" He proceeded to spew the culture-war, conspiracy-driven rhetoric that has come to define his presidency: "When Mexico sends its people... They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists." And he pledged to fix our problems with an array of promises that we now know meant zilch and came to nothing.

American factories and manufacturing jobs would come roaring back. Health care would get better and cheaper. America would start benefiting from renegotiated and better trade deals. Infrastructure would be rebuilt across the country. Five years later, President Trump hasn't just failed to deliver on these promises — he's set us back on nearly every measure.

His reckless trade war with China has cost over 300,000 jobs and decimated family farms. He failed to prepare for coronavirus, and as a result, over 115,000 American lives were lost, 20 million jobs destroyed, and our economy plunged into recession. Even in the midst of a global pandemic, he continues to try to rip away health care for patients with preexisting conditions. Americans have immensely suffered at the hands of this weak and incompetent president.

Tomorrow, on the fifth anniversary of his trip down the escalator, the DNC will launch a five-week campaign beginning with a one-minute television and digital ad entitled "Descent." Trump's descent down that escalator five years ago today has become a metaphor for his presidency. He's literally tried to take the country down with him, across almost every measure. But people are tired of the chaos and constant crisis, and know it's time for a change, because the country can't afford four more years of this.

To communicate this message to critical swing voters, DNC Chair Tom Perez will kick off a battleground states tour in Florida on Tuesday with Representative Val Demings, and the DNC will deploy a variety of integrated tactics including a Zoom roundtable with experts and storytellers, infographics, coordination with progressives allies across social media and more.

Read on for some of the ways that Trump's failed leadership has dragged America down, and contact the DNC War Room for the facts on these topics and others. Follow along [@DNCWarRoom](#).

**Trump Lost The Trade War, and American Workers Paid The Price.** Trump's go-it-alone tariff war inflicted pain on American workers, not China. Instead of forcing China to the table to negotiate a trade deal that protected us, China smelled Trump's desperation for a political win, played him and got all that it wanted.

- At his campaign launch, Trump said he would "beat China" on trade. He asked, "When was the last time anybody saw us beating, let's say, China in a trade deal? They kill us. I beat China all the time. All the time."
- That didn't happen. Not only did Trump's "phase one" trade deal fail to boost purchases of U.S. exports, it [failed to](#) even stop the bleeding by getting exports back to where they were before his damaging trade war. And China [won't come close](#) to purchasing the \$50 billion a year in U.S. agriculture that Trump promised.
- Meanwhile, American workers, farmers, and consumers have been decimated. U.S. farm bankruptcies increased [20%](#) last year to reach the highest level since 2011. The trade war resulted in [job losses and higher costs](#) for U.S. manufacturers and [erased](#) the limited benefits of his 2017 tax law for consumers.
- Trump's reckless trade policies [forced](#) the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates, leaving it with little room to lower rates even further and [half as much](#) firepower as it did going into the last recession.

**Trump Let China Off the Hook for the Pandemic, Causing Millions of Americans to Lose Their Jobs and More Than 115,000 to Lose Their Lives:** Trump was so eager to get a bad trade deal that he let China off the hook for its coverup of the pandemic. He repeatedly praised Xi Jinping for his leadership and transparency, refused to demand accountability, and downplayed the outbreak at home. Trump and his advisors continue to openly admit that they are hesitant to hold China accountable on the virus out of concern that it could jeopardize the trade deal he badly needed.

- As the coronavirus outbreak grew, and Trump came closer to locking his phase one trade deal with China, he and his administration repeatedly praised China and President Xi. They touted the trade agreement and the U.S.-China relationship, while failing to press China on the epidemic.
- And as the extent of the outbreak became more clear, Trump continued to defend China's handling of the coronavirus, saying, "We have a great trade deal. And we'd like to keep it, they'd like to keep it, and the relationship is good. As to whether or not their numbers are accurate, I'm not an accountant from China."
- As the virus spread throughout China, the U.S. continued to export critical medical supplies to China with the encouragement of the U.S. government. While U.S. exports spiked, imports from China of supplies fell below normal levels as Trump downplayed the coronavirus threat back home.

- When asked why he had praised China's coronavirus response, Trump [responded](#), "We did a trade deal and everybody was very happy... I'm making a trade deal with China, of course I'm going to be complimentary."

**Unprecedented Unemployment and an Economy in Recession:** Tens of millions of workers lost their jobs unnecessarily because of Trump's mismanagement of the coronavirus crisis.

- At his campaign launch, Trump said, "I will be the greatest jobs president that God ever created. I tell you that." But as a result of his failure to address the outbreak early, we have unprecedented unemployment and an economy in recession.
- Five years later, the unemployment rate is the [highest](#) since the Great Depression. More than [20 million](#) Americans are unemployed. Black and Hispanic workers have [disproportionately](#) suffered from job losses during the pandemic.
- Even before Trump's mismanagement of the coronavirus crisis, [small business confidence](#) had taken a hit due to Trump's trade policies. Then the Trump administration [botched](#) its [management](#) of the Paycheck Protection Program, preventing small firms and businesses from getting timely help to help weather the pandemic, while large corporations got loans. [More than 100,000](#) small businesses have closed for good, and [more than 40%](#) of Black small businesses have had to shut down.

**Trump's Tax Cuts Rewarded the Rich and Weakened Our Economy:** Trump took the strong Obama-Biden economy and made it fragile with economic policies that benefited the rich while leaving everyone else vulnerable to downturn. Thanks to Trump's tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations, the gap between the richest Americans and everyone else grew bigger than ever under Trump's watch.

- Trump's tax scam [overwhelmingly](#) benefitted corporate interests and the wealthy, and didn't create jobs or boost wages as Trump promised. In 2018, corporations paid [\\$91 billion](#) less in taxes than in 2017 before Trump's tax law.
- Corporations racked up [\\$19 trillion](#) in debt that made our economy more vulnerable to a downturn after spending the money they got from Trump's tax cuts on stock [buybacks](#) for themselves and their wealthy shareholders.
- Trump's tax law eliminated provisions to help companies [avoid laying off workers](#) during an economic downturn in order to help fund a [bigger cut](#) to the corporate tax rate.
- Even before coronavirus hit, [half](#) of Americans were living paycheck to paycheck and [many](#) worried daily about being able to pay their bills. Household debt hit a record high of [\\$14 trillion](#) at the end of 2019.

**Trump's Attempts To Rip Health Care Away From As Many As 133 Million Americans With Preexisting Conditions:** It's been nearly four years of an administration that has done more to rip health care away from Americans than to help them gain it.

- At his campaign launch, Trump promised to provide health care that would be “much better and much less expensive for people.”
- Trump's first act as president was to sign an [executive order](#) instructing all his cabinet agencies to begin dismantling the Affordable Care Act (ACA). When Trump's plan to repeal the law in Congress failed, he and his administration continued their campaign to sabotage the law at every turn while pursuing its complete dismantling in the courts.
- Trump's lawsuit to overturn the ACA could lead to the elimination of coverage for more than 20 million Americans and the termination of Medicaid expansion, end protections for as many as 133 million Americans with preexisting conditions and spike costs for millions of others, including seniors.
- As a result of Trump's sabotage of the ACA, the uninsured rate has increased every year he has been in office — [millions more Americans are uninsured because of him](#).

**Trump's Demonization of Immigrants:** For the past four years, immigrants have been under assault by a president who stokes racial and cultural division to get ahead. Meanwhile, American taxpayers and our military are footing the bill for the border wall Trump promised Mexico would pay for, that was never needed and won't even work to do what Trump wants.

- At his campaign launch, Trump said immigrants from Mexico were “rapists” and promised that he “would build a great wall, and nobody builds walls better than me, believe me, and I'll build them very inexpensively, I will build a great, great wall on our southern border. And I will have Mexico pay for that wall. Mark my words.”
- As president, Trump complained about immigrants coming from “[shithole countries](#),” said Haitian immigrants “[all have AIDS](#)” and Nigerian immigrants would never “[go back to their huts](#).” He said undocumented immigrants were “[invading](#)” and “[infesting](#)” our country. He said our immigration policy should be “[you can't come in](#).”
- Trump [declared](#) a national emergency and illegally [diverted](#) money from military construction projects to pay for his border wall. He repeatedly threatened to shut down the government and veto funding for essential programs if taxpayers didn't fund his border wall.

**Trump Took Over The Swamp:** Trump promised that he'd be a different kind of politician, but he's proven to be the ultimate swamp creature, to the detriment of working families.

- At his campaign launch, Trump said, “It's nice. I don't need anybody's money. I'm using my own money. I'm not using the lobbyists. I'm not using donors. I don't care. I'm really rich. I (inaudible). And by the way, I'm not even saying that's the kind of mindset, that's the kind of

thinking you need for this country.” He said he’d rid Washington, D.C. of corruption: “We’re going to drain the swamp of corruption in Washington, DC. Drain the swamp.”

- But here’s what happened: Trump’s administration has [embraced lobbyists](#) and [donors seeking favors](#) with open arms, and halfway through his presidency it had [hundreds](#) of former lobbyists working in its ranks. Trump signed an executive order that included an ethics pledge that his appointees would not leave the public sector to become lobbyists — [but dozens have](#).
- Trump’s culture of corruption rubbed off on his appointees. [One after another](#), Trump’s appointed government officials worked to benefit themselves instead of the American people.

### **Trump’s Proposals To Cut Hundreds Of Billions From Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security:**

- At his campaign launch, Trump promised not to cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. He said, “Save Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security without cuts. Have to do it.”
- But year after year, Trump proposed hundreds of billions in budget cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. His last budget proposed cutting Medicaid spending by [\\$920 billion](#), Medicare by [\\$480 billion](#), and Social Security by [\\$24 billion](#). His budget before that proposed cutting spending on Medicaid by [\\$1.5 trillion](#), Medicare by [\\$575 billion](#), and a [\\$26 billion](#) cut to Social Security.
- Last year, Trump admitted that if re-elected, he wants to cut Social Security and Medicare. He [said](#) in response to a question about entitlements, “At the right time, we will take a look at that. You know, that’s actually the easiest of all things... we’ll be cutting, but we’re also going to have growth like you’ve never had before.”