



SUMMARY: Emergency Price Stabilization Act of 2022

Our country has been hit by a full-blown cost of living crisis: food and gas prices have skyrocketed, on top of never-ending increases in rent, medical, and utility bills. Now, as the Federal Reserve responds by hiking interest rates – an attempt to slow inflation by throwing people out of work – we are facing the prospect of a recession. **Struggling Americans need relief and protection, not punishment and austerity.**

What is behind today's soaring prices? Despite fearmongering from powerful interests, the problem is not that workers are fighting for decent wages. Nor is it the American Rescue Plan, which brought desperately needed public investment to our communities.

The real causes of this inflation are clear: decades of corporate greed that have left our supply chains brittle; the global economic shocks of the pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine; and price-gouging from companies taking advantage of all of the above, while [boasting](#) about it to their wealthy investors. [Over half](#) of the recent growth in prices is linked to exploding corporate profits, while labor costs contributed less than 8%. While our government is taking some important steps in response to inflation, these conditions call for faster, nimble action that is targeted to the sources of instability.

Rep. Bowman's Emergency Price Stabilization Act will launch a whole-of-government effort to tackle the cost of living crisis head-on. The bill expands the existing White House Supply Chains Disruption Task Force, creating a new Sub-Task Force that is empowered to:

- **Monitor and analyze price changes** related to food, energy, housing, health care, transportation, and other goods and services that are vital to the country's health and economic security;
- **Proactively investigate corporate profiteering** in those areas, including price-gouging linked to supply chain disruptions, by using subpoena power to open up and examine corporate books;
- **Make recommendations to the President for appropriate, strategic controls and regulations** to limit growth and reduce volatility in those key prices, which the President is temporarily authorized to implement;
- **Engage and mobilize the public** as part of the process of monitoring and regulating prices, and harness the expertise of federal agencies, outside experts, unions, and community organizations; and

- **Propose complementary measures** to ensure adequate supply of relevant goods and services, expand productive capacity, and meet climate and public health standards in the application of any price controls or regulations.

There is nothing “natural,” and certainly nothing democratic, about the way prices are currently set in our economy: by a handful of corporate executives. Americans take it for granted that the prices of basic necessities should be regulated. But from local rent control boards to state utility commissions, our institutions have failed to apply this principle adequately or in the public interest. The Emergency Price Stabilization Act will fix that – and provide immediate relief to workers and consumers, while preparing us to weather future economic shocks on an unpredictable, rapidly warming planet.

At several points in our history, especially during and after World War II, the federal government has mobilized the country to bring prices and profits under democratic control. We can do so again today.