

There Is More At Stake Than Just The Presidency

As the Biden/Harris ticket has solidified themselves, our votes mean more than just who will take the oval office.

Murjani Rawls
29 min

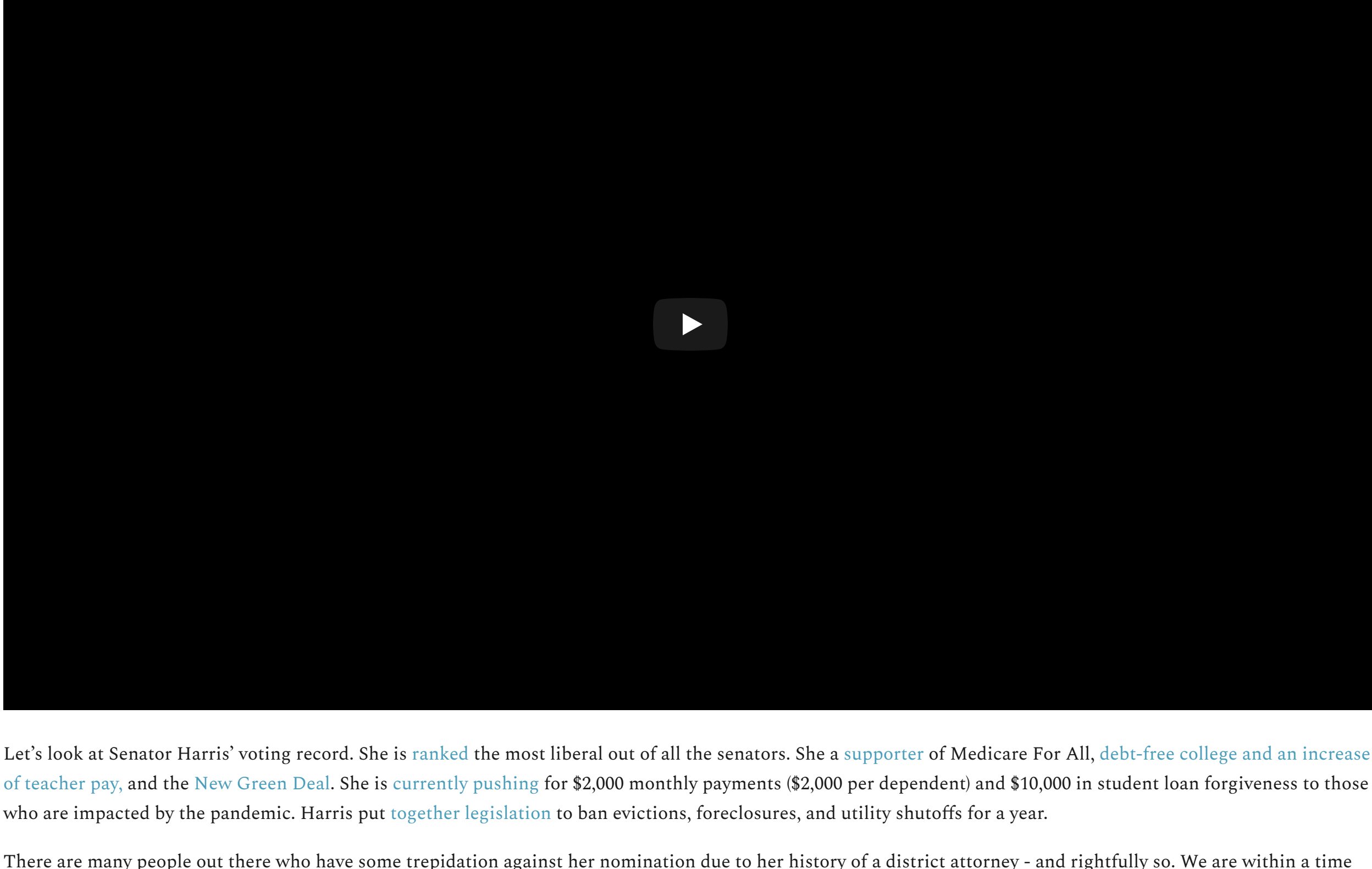


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In June of 2019, Democratic Presidential nominee Joe Biden made a [statement](#) about working with segregationist senators such as then Georgia representative Herny Talmadge and opposing busing in the 1970s. During the second Democratic debate, Senator Kamala Harris was able to speak to Biden about his comments. One of the most powerful moments was when they locked eyes and she said, *“there was a little girl in California who was part of the second class to integrate her public schools. And she was bused to school every day. And that little girl was me.”* She was able to tell him how hurtful his comment was. Harris is the second African-American woman and first South Asian-American senator in history. Now, she stands to make history again if elected to the office of vice president.

Some people have met the Biden/Harris ticket with a collective sigh. “More of the same. They don’t represent us.” This eerily sounds like the talks of 2016 and that’s not good. America has considerably gone backward since the January 2017s inauguration day. In less than three months, we will all vote on who will lead this country for the next four years. I’m asking you to look at the bigger picture and even beyond the fine print.

There will be a presidential election on Tuesday, November 3rd. We are voting more than just who is at the top of the ticket. It’s probably one of the most important elections and history and if we don’t exercise it, the progress that we’ve made within the last few months will be all for naught. Even when we vote, the work isn’t finished. It’s our job to hold our elected officials accountable and make this country into one that works at the advantage of all who inhabit it.



Let’s look at Senator Harris’ voting record. She is [ranked](#) the most liberal out of all the senators. She a [supporter](#) of Medicare For All, [debt-free college and an increase of teacher pay](#), and the [New Green Deal](#). She is [currently pushing](#) for \$2,000 monthly payments (\$2,000 per dependent) and \$10,000 in student loan forgiveness to those who are impacted by the pandemic. Harris put [together legislation](#) to ban evictions, foreclosures, and utility shutoffs for a year.

There are many people out there who have some trepidation against her nomination due to her history of a district attorney - and rightfully so. We are within a time where police brutality is at the forefront and the time for change is long overdue. In 2010, Senator Harris was [against](#) the use of recreational marijuana. However, in 2018, she [co-sponsored](#) a bill with Senator Cory Booker to end the criminalization of marijuana. Just a reminder, former President Obama [had a road](#) to get to be the first sitting President to be in favor of gay marriage. Biden [was for](#) same-sex marriage before he was. Obama’s viewpoint evolved as he had discussions with the LGBTQ community. That is what’s supposed to happen. You take in new information, consider the viewpoints of other people who are not like you, and then you make changes.

In the case of [Kevin Cooper](#) where a DNA test could have exonerated him in a murder case in 1985, Harris didn’t take it upon appeal. In 2018, she [came out](#) for DNA testing afterward, but people have rightfully challenged her on doing things while she was position to do so. As an attorney general in California, she pushed the [adoption](#) of a body camera program for police. With one caveat, this was just for the California Department of Justice agents and not for all police officers across the state.

Yes, her case record is mixed with both good and bad. No politician is perfect. I don’t say that to discourage or patronize you. We are beyond the time where our constituents need to represent the views of the people that they serve. However, people can evolve throughout time. Joe Biden has been long pressed with his assistance in favor of the 1994 crime bill, which many Democrats adopted at that time. Biden is now for things like [tuition-free college](#) in some form, [freezing deportations](#), [clean energy](#), and an [entire platform](#) for Black Americans. Harris is for [equal pay](#) between the salaries of men and women and notes things such as having a [national police system relief board](#) in her [criminal justice reform plan](#).

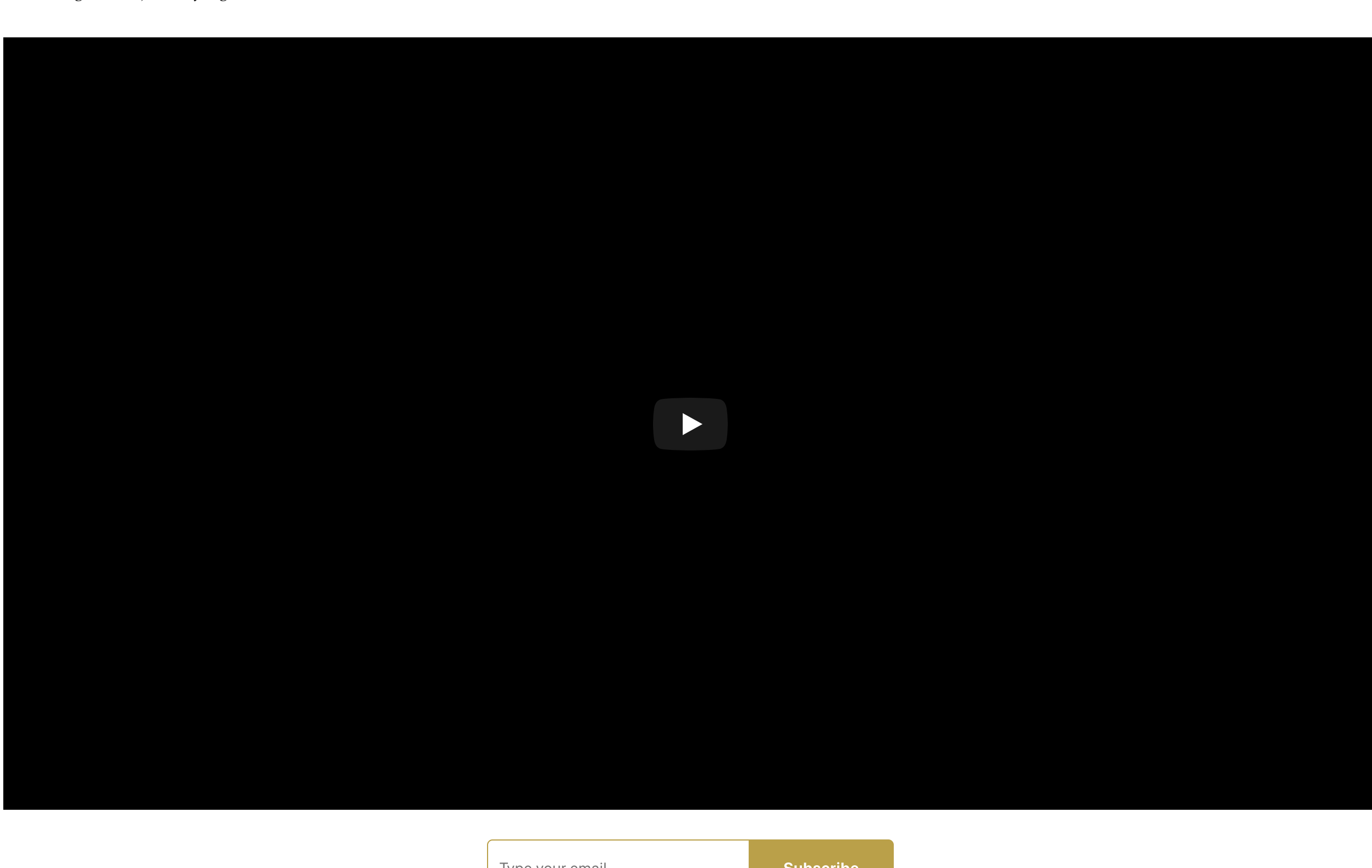
Take a step back and think about these three in a half years:

1. Many parents have to mull the decision to send their kids to school where many states are still within the jaws of this pandemic. There were 97,000 children who [tested positive](#) for the Coronavirus. Teachers are preparing [wills](#). States do not have money to make the necessary changes across the board to make in-school learning as safe as possible.
2. There is an active attack on the postal service. With an upcoming election that is widely going to rely on mail-in-voting, it’s more than apparent that the intention is to [curb that considerably](#).
3. Americans are hurting. If you take a look at the [Reddit unemployment thread](#), there are stories of people being down to their last \$20. They have to decide between paying for utilities or diapers. We are going into the third week without the \$600 enhanced unemployment benefit - where many used to stay afloat. There’s a comprehensive relief bill that’s currently stalled in the Senate and the executive actions by the President
4. During the pandemic, the Trump administration is actively [trying to repeal](#) the Affordable Care Act. Up to 23 million Americans would lose coverage.
5. We still do not have a comprehensive plan to curb the virus-like other developed countries and it doesn’t look like that is going to happen.

The fight doesn’t stop at election day. It doesn’t slow down at inauguration day. Much of what America is founded on was at the expense of others. Black people were thought of being 3/5th of a man. Women weren’t allowed to vote. Native Americans were driven off of their land. Think about the concept of allocating funds from policing and putting into things like mental health and community programs. Strides in which, were not made by politicians. They were done by the people marching in the streets and making their voices heard. From the deafening voices, representatives have taken heed. Some have pushed those issues to the forefront.

Just like Senator Harris challenged Biden on the debate stage - we have to continue to press our elected officials from their first day of office. That’s how progress is made. It’s not from apathy - that’s what got us here. It’s continually challenging whatever the status quo is. That’s what people like the late great John Lewis did. We have to keep getting into good trouble. There is more at stake than the presidency. There are a house and a senate majority. Potential Supreme Court judge seats whose decisions on things like health care and abortion will impact generations for decades. There are picks on the line about state and local governments that will influence our day-to-day lives. If you don’t want to vote for the top of the ticket, think of everything else.

Besides, Kamala Harris is a fighter. The Democratic party needs some new ideas and some gusto. Remember her questions with Supreme Court Judge Brett Kavanaugh? I’m just saying.



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