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The COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic was extremely devastating in many aspects. To many, it was the beginning of a financial nightmare due to none-essential jobs being closed. On the other hand, backstretch workers had to continue working despite being at risk for getting exposed to the virus. Personally, the pandemic negatively impacted our family specially financially and mentally.

To begin, I was faced with having to adjust to online classes meaning I needed high speed WIFI to avoid interruptions. My job which is in retail was closed due to it being categorized as none-essential. Since I wasn't working, my dad was the only one working in the racetrack during half of the pandemic until my mom was able to join him as well. With only having one source of income in the family, we were forced to look in to supplemental assistance that the government funds in order to have money for food. Despite my mom being against it, I filled out an application which was approved. The supplemental nutritional assistance program, which was new to all of us, helped us enormously specially with food prices rising. Till this day, gas prices and food prices keep rising, yet backstretch workers are still being underpaid and overworked with no days off, no holidays off or even sick days off.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic was catastrophic in many ways, it was also important to appreciate all the financial aid that was being offered. For example, my college was able to give us COVID-19 grants for two semesters. Additionally, we were able to apply to some scholarships if the pandemic was an obstacle to continuing our education. On top of that, my school offered small WIFI's and laptops to borrow through the first semester of the pandemic. To summarize, although the pandemic was difficult to many of us from the racetrack, there was ways we could have looked for help to aid us in the financial aspect.

Adding on, the pandemic was mentally draining. Being stuck in a room with a household of four without going out due to everything being closed and everyone at fear of being exposed to the virus. Living in the racetrack has its advantages, yet during the pandemic it was one of the disadvantageous due to the small living environment.

The government did help those with less resources by giving out a stimulus check. That check was essential to many undocumented individuals that unfortunately lost their jobs due to the pandemic and were unable to receive unemployment. That stimulus check also meant a little breather for our family that only had one individual working throughout the pandemic. Thus, the government could have played a major role in helping those struggling to pay their rents, mortgages, and housing overall. In my opinion, the government could have implemented shelters throughout the city where individuals could receive housing, food and even hygiene toiletries for those being evacuated from their homes due to not being able to afford their rent during the pandemic. The government could have also temporarily stopped sales taxes on groceries as soon as the pandemic started. Overall, the government did play a role in helping lower income families throughout the pandemic.

To conclude, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our family at the track negatively, yet there was assistance that we reached out to support us financially. Although COVID-19 is not completely over yet, we have adjusted to the enormous changes and will continue to adapt to whatever comes next.