

House Dems Release Infrastructure Bill



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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Washington Update

Moving America Forward

On Monday, June 22, House Democrats' released text of their massive infrastructure bill, Moving America Forward, that aims to create jobs and rebuild America. Provisions in the package include a \$130 billion investment in school infrastructure targeted at high-poverty schools with facilities that endanger the health and safety of students and educators. A June Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found more than half of the nation's public school districts need to update or replace critical building systems.

It also includes \$500 billion to rebuild and reimagine the country's transportation infrastructure; and addresses structural challenges and upgrades child care facilities by leveraging a 5-year, \$10 billion federal investment to generate additional state and private investments in making sure that child care settings are safe, appropriate, and able to comply with current and future public health directives. In addition, it includes \$100 billion to promote competition for broadband internet infrastructure in unserved and underserved communities; prioritizing those with persistent poverty to get children

connected to remote learning, close broadband adoption and digital skills gaps, and enhance payment support for low-income households and the recently unemployed. The package also promotes new renewable energy infrastructure by incentivizing the development of wind and solar on public lands and building a workforce for offshore wind.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (CA) intends for the legislation to pass the House before the July 4 recess.

[Click here](#) to access the full text of the bill.

[Click here](#) to access a section-by-section summary.

[Click here](#) to access the fact sheet.

Fourth Coronavirus Relief Package

As Congress continues to negotiate timing of a fourth coronavirus package, pressure to extend unemployment benefits keeps mounting. As COVID-19 infections continue to rise in some states, the jobless rates remain at levels not seen since the Great Depression. The expanded benefits that were included in the CARES Act helped millions of Americans get through coronavirus-related lockdowns, but they are set to end in August. Republicans oppose extending the extra \$600 a week benefit for recipients, saying it could make unemployment more lucrative than working and provide disincentive for people to return to work. Democrats worry that cutting or reducing the benefit would leave poor people without a safety net.

A Federal Reserve report released on Friday, June 19, noted that recipients could find themselves in a dire situation without the expanded benefits. It also warns that if the benefits are ended, low-wage workers will feel they have to return to work, regardless of whether or not it's safe to do so. Last week, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said the economy won't fully recover until the public is sure the coronavirus has been contained. Powell acknowledged signs that the economy is stabilizing, but cautioned that joblessness is still near historic levels.

[Click here](#) to access the Federal Reserve report.

Appropriations

House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey (NY) announced a marathon of subcommittee markups on FY21 spending bills scheduled for July 6, followed by full committee markups and consideration of subcommittee allocations on July 9. The markups will allow for both in-person and remote participation from lawmakers, with plenty of time to clean the hearing room between bills. She stressed that times might change if the committee can secure a second hearing room. House appropriators plan to include more pandemic aid and police reform measures in the annual funding

measures — two issues that have derailed markups in the Senate, which were supposed to begin next week. Bill texts will be released about 24 hours in advance of subcommittee markups. The Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education is set to markup their bill on Tuesday, July 7 at 5:00 p.m. (ET). The full House is expected to vote on spending bills during the last two weeks in July.

Child Care Legislation

On Tuesday, June 16, Congresswoman Katherine Clark (MA) introduced the Child Care Infrastructure Act, which would infuse \$10 billion over five years into child care infrastructure, and provide \$35 million for early childhood education and workforce development. It would also direct the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct two national needs assessments of early child care and learning facilities to understand the impact of the pandemic in the first year; evaluate the ongoing needs of child care facilities by year four; and ask the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the tax credit for employer-provided child care. The bill would administer a student loan repayment program of up to \$6,000 annually for five years for early childhood educators working for providers eligible to receive Child Care and Development Block Grant funding. It would also provide up to \$3,000 annually to eligible individuals pursuing a Childhood Development Associate Credential or an associate's degree.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the bill.

Paycheck Protection Program

On Wednesday, June 17, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) posted a revised, borrower-friendly Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan forgiveness application implementing the PPP Flexibility Act of 2020. SBA also published a new EZ version of the forgiveness application that applies to: borrowers who are self-employed and have no employees; those who did not reduce the salaries or wages of their employees by more than 25% or reduce the number or hours of their employees; and finally, those who experienced reductions in business activity as a result of health directives related to COVID-19, and did not reduce the salaries or wages of their employees by more than 25%.

The EZ application, done in consultation with the Department of Treasury, requires fewer calculations and less documentation for eligible borrowers. Both applications give borrowers the option of using the original 8-week covered period or an extended 24-week covered period. These changes are intended to result in a more efficient process and make it easier for businesses to realize full forgiveness of their PPP loan.

[Click here](#) to view the EZ Forgiveness Application.

[Click here](#) to view the Full Forgiveness Application.

House Education and Labor Committee

On Monday, June 22, the House Education and Labor Committee will hold the hearing “Inequities Exposed: How Covid-19 Widened Racial Inequities in Education, Health, and the Workforce.” Witnesses for the hearing include Camara P. Jones, M.D., M.P.H., Ph.D., Adjunct Professor, Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University, Senior Fellow and Adjunct Associate Professor at Morehouse School of Medicine, Past President, American Public Health Association; Valerie Rawlston Wilson, Ph.D. Director, Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy at Economic Policy Institute; Avik Roy, Co-Founder and President at The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity; and John B. King, Jr., President and CEO at The Education Trust.

[Click here](#) to access the hearing.

Foreign Worker EO

President Donald Trump is expected to extend the foreign-worker restrictions, initially enacted in April because of the coronavirus pandemic, through the end of the year. Trump will expand on the executive order (EO) barring most people from receiving a permanent residency visa or green card, but including most guest workers who come to the U.S. for temporary or seasonal work. This will include skilled workers in industries such as landscaping, housekeeping and construction. The measure exempts students and agricultural workers but will likely anger business leaders who rely on foreign workers to keep industries staffed.

Initial Jobless Claims

On Thursday, June 18, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released the unemployment insurance weekly claims. In the week ending June 13, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 1,508,000, a decrease of 58,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 24,000 from 1,542,000 to 1,566,000. The 4-week moving average was 1,773,500, a decrease of 234,500 from the previous week's revised average. The previous week's average was revised up by 6,000 from 2,002,000 to 2,008,000. The advance seasonally adjusted insured unemployment rate was 14.1 percent for the week ending June 6, unchanged from the previous week's revised rate.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

DOL/ETA

**Department of Labor Issues OSHA Guidance as Non-Essential
Businesses Reopen and Employees Return to Work**

On Thursday, June 18, the Department of Labor's (DOL) Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued guidance to assist employers reopening non-essential businesses and their employees returning to work during the evolving coronavirus pandemic. The guidance supplements the U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' previously developed Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 and the White House's Guidelines for Opening up America Again. The guidelines provide general principles for updating restrictions originally put in place to slow the spread of the coronavirus. During each phase of the reopening process, employers should continue to focus on strategies for basic hygiene, social distancing, identification and isolation of sick employees, workplace controls and flexibilities, and employee training.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

WDC in the News

Powell Urges Congressional Help for Unemployed, Municipalities as Economy Recovers from Coronavirus

On Wednesday, June 17, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell specifically recommended that Congress extend unemployment insurance benefits, support state and local governments, and funnel more help to cash-strapped small businesses. Historically, the central banker has shied away from providing recommendations on what policies Congress should pursue. However, Powell expressed concern that an emerging recovery from the coronavirus pandemic could prompt lawmakers to curtail support prematurely. "I would think that it would be a concern if Congress were to pull back from the support that it is providing too quickly," Powell said in virtual testimony to the House Financial Services Committee. He repeated that both the Fed and Congress should be prepared to do more based on the trajectory of the recovery.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

HHS Awards \$107.2 Million to Grow and Train the Health Workforce

On Thursday, June 18, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), is announcing awards totaling \$107.2 million to 310 recipients to increase the health workforce in rural and underserved communities. Recipients across 45 states and U.S. territories received funding to improve the quality, distribution and diversity of health professionals serving across the country.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

Why Completing the Census is Essential for Local Workforce Development Efforts

COVID-19 has impacted our daily lives in peculiar ways. Even in these difficult times, people are looking for ways to help. From donating masks to supporting local businesses to buying groceries for elderly neighbors, community members have stepped up to support one another. While following CDC guidance to maintain good hand hygiene and practice social distancing are priority in protecting our public health, completing the 2020 census is priority to protecting our future and the future of generations to come.

Let's be clear, there is a lot at stake as it relates to census 2020. Getting an accurate count in Philadelphia is crucial to ensuring that we receive our fair share of representation and federal funding for not only the next decade, but for the next time we face an economic crisis, as we are seeing now from the impact of COVID-19. The results of the 2020 census will be used to determine the level of representation and decision-making power that we have on the local, state, and federal levels of government. It also serves as the basis of funding allocations for some of the most critical public services that our city needs.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

Reports & Articles

New from Randstad

Randstad Workmonitor COVID-19 Edition

On Wednesday, June 17, Randstad released its Workmonitor COVID-19 global report. In the latest edition of the Workmonitor, Randstad asked participants from 15 markets across the globe about the impact of the coronavirus crisis on their job and wellbeing and found that more than half of employees fear losing their job because of the COVID-19 pandemic; 52% believe their employer will help them find a new job if they are furloughed from their current one; and 83% say they have adapted to the challenges of the new working situation.

[Click here](#) to access the report.

New from Brookings

In Too Many American Communities, Mass Incarceration Has Become a Jobs Program

The killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer has sparked a national reckoning over police violence and anti-Black racism in the United States. As protests continue, the country's sprawling criminal justice and carceral system has once again been spotlighted as a powerful driver of racial inequality in the country. Frustrated by the insufficiency of reform efforts undertaken since the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. six years ago, the Black Lives Matter movement is now demanding cities reallocate public resources away from inflated police department budgets and approach public safety more holistically. And sure enough, nine of 13 Minneapolis city council members have already committed to disbanding the city's police department, while other cities are entertaining substantial budget cuts as well.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

Fast Fact

An industry-wide study of over 2,500 people found that 55% of workers would take less pay to have more fun at work.



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