

THE SOUTH CAROLINA BLUES FEDERAL POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE



September 2021

What's in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill?

August was a busy month for the bipartisan infrastructure bill. It passed the Senate in early August and was voted on in the House on August 24. The bill includes \$550 billion in new infrastructure investments over the next five years. The Congressional Budget Office stated that the bill will add \$256 billion to the deficit over the next ten years. America's recent score from the American Society of Civil Engineers of a C- assisted in fueling the argument that our infrastructure desperately needs attention. Here's a summary of what's included:

\$110 Billion for Roads, Bridges, and Major Projects

Investment will focus on climate change mitigation, resilience, equity and safety for users. Includes \$40 billion for bridge repair, replacement and rehabilitation and \$16 billion for major projects.

\$105 Billion for Public Transit/Passenger and Freight Rail

Investment will focus on modernizing and expanding the transit rail systems.

\$73 Billion for Power Infrastructure

Investment will build thousands of miles of new, resilient transmission lines that will facilitate and expand renewable energy.

\$65 Billion for a Nationwide High-Speed Internet

\$55 Billion for Clean Drinking Water

Investment will deliver clean drinking water to 10 million American families and over 400,000 schools and childcare facilities while also removing lead service lines and pipes.

\$50 Billion for Resilience and Western Water Infrastructure

Investment will enhance our infrastructure's ability to handle impacts of climate change, cyber-attacks, and extreme weather conditions such as droughts and flooding.

\$25 Billion for Airports

Investment to include terminal renovations and maintenance backlogs, reduce congestion and emissions, promote electrification and multimodal connections.

\$65 Billion for Additional Programs

Additional programs include \$21 billion for environmental remediation including cleaning up Superfund and brownfield sites, reclaiming abandoned mine land and capping orphaned gas wells, \$17 billion for ports and waterways, \$11 billion for safety, \$7.5 billion for electrical vehicle infrastructure, \$7.5 billion for electric buses/transit and \$1 billion to reconnect communities divided by highways and infrastructure.

Congress plans to pay for the bill by repurposing COVID relief funds, terminating pandemic unemployment benefits early, imposing new Superfund fees, changing the tax reporting requirements for cryptocurrencies, delaying a Trump administration rule on how drugs are priced and paid for in Medicare and Medicaid until 2026, and use of future funds from an estimated 33% ROI on long-term projects through the bill.

This is a developing article as this is a small piece of the larger reconciliation package that will be the center of discussions in September.



What's happening with the census?

Census data has been collected and preliminary results were released to the states back on August 12. The final districting data toolkit will be delivered to the states and public by September 30. To refresh from our July newsletter, the census determines congressional seats, the distribution of billions of dollars in federal funds, is used to make decisions about community services, and provides age information for programs like social security. Census data is taken every ten years and used to determine accurate representation in the House of Representatives. Every state is guaranteed one seat and the largest states can receive 50 or more seats. Each state is required to go through the process of redrawing its electoral map every decade. Every state must follow certain federal redistricting requirements; however, the states get to determine who has the authority to control this group.

The 2020 census was the first to use the internet to submit responses which created a concern that hard-to-count populations may not have internet access.

The census requires half a million temporary workers. Positions are filled by field canvassers, recruiting assistants, office operations, clerks, and field supervisors. Field canvassers are required to verify addresses for invitations and for non-response follow-ups.

According to the US Census Bureau, our total population is at 331,449,281 with an additional 3,285,874 in Puerto Rico. 350,686 of our citizens live overseas in roles such as the US military, federal civilian employees, and their dependents.

Key redistricting takeaways from the 2020 census

- The US population growth was slower than any time since 1930
- The US population is more racially and ethnically diverse than ever before
- The fastest growing metro area was "The Villages" in Florida which is a retirement community and saw a 39% increase over the last ten years
- The metro Atlanta region was the fastest growing region in Georgia for the first time ever and is a majority nonwhite
- Most of New York's population loss occurred in its northern rural districts while New York City grew 8% over the last ten years
- Texas' metro areas saw some of the largest growths in the country, but population in other locations across the state decreased
- Six of the top seven fastest-growing districts in the US are in Texas

Over the past decade there has been a 276% increase in the multiracial population with the "Some Other Race alone or in combination" group having the biggest increase and now sits at the second largest population group. The Latinx or Hispanic population grew 23%. The states with the highest diversity scores are found in the West, South and Northeast. Hawaii has the highest diversity index at 76%.

The US House has had 435 seats since 1963 when two temporary seats for Alaska and Hawaii were removed. Texas and Florida are the only two states that have received an increase in House seats in all of the past five reapportionments. Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York have all lost seats in those years.

The 2020 reapportionment results indicate that Texas will gain 2 seats while Florida, North Carolina, Colorado, Montana, and Oregon will all gain 1 seat. Illinois, Michigan, New York, Philadelphia, Ohio, West Virginia, and California will all lose 1 seat.

Sourced from US Census Bureau website and National Journal.

