

American Jobs Plan Targets Resilience, Green Tech, and Remediation to Strengthen Crumbling Infrastructure

Article By:

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President Biden's sweeping infrastructure proposal, the American Jobs Plan, takes a broad view of what constitutes infrastructure and tackles many of the issues President Biden highlighted in his campaign, including climate change, the state of the country's traditional infrastructure, and social inequality. The massive \$2 trillion plan creates incentives and opportunities for utilities and other entities in the energy sector to remediate legacy sites and pivot toward a more resilient and greener energy infrastructure.

For years, advocacy groups have been sounding the alarm about the deteriorating state of the nation's infrastructure. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ACSE) gave the country a C- in its [Report Card](#). Through a series of proposed congressional acts, administrative rulemakings, and executive orders, President Biden's plan purports to correct many infrastructure shortcomings identified by the ACSE and other groups.

Improving Grid Resilience and Access

One of President Biden's primary goals is to increase the resilience of the country's electric transmission system. The ACSE has warned that severe weather events related to climate change have threatened [energy transmission resilience](#) and left many of America's most vulnerable communities susceptible to outages and unreliable transmission. The infrastructure plan proposes to increase resilience by:

- Implementing an investment tax credit to incentivize the construction of at least 20 gigawatts of high-voltage capacity power lines.
- Creating a Grid Deployment Authority at the U.S. Department of Energy. Little information has been introduced about the Authority, but the Administration says that it will be used to spur high-voltage transmission line installation through "creative financial tools."
- Laying thousands of miles of transmission lines to provide reliable electricity to rural Americans without reliable electricity and internet.
- Expanding high-speed broadband infrastructure to provide 100 percent nationwide coverage.

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- Investing \$45 billion to eliminate all lead pipes and service lines in the nation's drinking water system.
 - Fixing aging oil and gas pipes and distribution system to reduce leaks.

Resilience Through Green Technology

As part of the proposal to increase resilience, President Biden's plan also introduces broad incentives for industry to rebuild the energy grid with greener technologies. The ACSE has advocated for green technologies to [enhance the resilience of the nation's infrastructure](#). The plan calls for:

- Investing in green technologies to improve economic conditions in what the plan refers to as "distressed communities." The plan calls for a production tax credit for decarbonized hydrogen demonstration projects; establishing carbon capture retrofits for steel, cement, and chemical production factories; and expanding existing tax credits to encourage carbon capture use.
- Providing a 10-year extension of investment tax credit and production tax credits for green energy generation and storage.
- Offering clean energy block grants to state, local, and tribal governments seeking to modernize green energy infrastructure and train employees to use the new technology.
- Investing \$46 billion in federal buying power focused on electric vehicles, charging ports, and electric heat pumps.
- Committing the federal government to purchasing 24/7 "clean power" for federal buildings to push the market to develop a "clean power" infrastructure.
- Establishing an Energy Efficiency and Clean Electricity Standard to incentivize "more efficient" use of infrastructure including leveraging existing nuclear and hydropower facilities and advancing new ones.

Remediation

President Biden's plan calls for tens of billions of dollars to be invested in remediating hazardous waste sites. The ACSE has previously warned [that underfunding in hazardous waste cleanup](#) poses a risk to human and environmental health, especially where hazardous waste remains in areas that are at risk of flooding, storm surges, wildfires, or within the zone of rising sea levels. President Biden's plan calls for:

- Investing \$16 billion in plugging orphan oil and gas wells and reclaiming former mines to abate ongoing air and water contamination.
- Investing \$5 billion in remediating and redeveloping brownfield and Superfund sites to turn decommissioned facilities and unused property into "new hubs of economic growth and job creation."

- Restoring the requirement that the fossil fuel industry pay into the Superfund Trust Fund to pay for remediation of Superfund sites.
- Investing in the Appalachian Regional Commission's POWER grant program aimed at awarding grants to address pollution at legacy power sites.
- Eliminating tax subsidies and credits for the fossil fuel industry to push the country towards a goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.

The aggressive plan would take years and significant coordination between the White House, Congress, and several executive agencies to fully implement. For more information on the impact the infrastructure plan may have on your industry, contact a member of Schiff's Environmental Group.

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