



Infrastructure and Jobs Act Key Highlights

On August 10, 2021, the U.S. Senate passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This bipartisan legislation would invest in the nation's infrastructure, including funding for roads and bridges, rail, transit, ports, airports, electric grid, water systems, broadband, among other priorities. The legislation provides \$944 billion in total spending over five years, totaling \$550 billion in new spending.¹ This legislation provides \$66 billion to address the infrastructure needs of the US Rail network as well as \$73 billion for the bipartisan Energy Infrastructure Act, which includes funds for grid reliability and resiliency; critical minerals and supply chains for clean energy technology, and critical energy technologies like carbon capture, hydrogen, direct air capture, and energy efficiency.

Specific aspects that are relevant to the REC include:

- \$6 Billion funding towards the procurement & deferred maintenance backlog that currently exists on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor between Washington and Boston.
- \$24 Billion to provide funding for capital projects to repair, replace, or rehabilitate qualified railroad assets
- \$16 Billion to provide the Amtrak National Network with updated station locations and modernization, safety investments including grade crossings, fencing, and collision prevention technology
- \$5 Billion for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Program (CRISI). This program leverages private, state, and local investments to support safety enhancements and general improvements to infrastructure for both intercity passenger and freight railroads
- \$3 Billion for the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program that provides funds for the elimination of hazards at railway-highway crossings
- \$50 Million for restoration and enhancement grants to fund operating assistance for initiating, restoring, or enhancing intercity passenger rail transportation. Projects such as additional frequency of current service, offering of new on-board services, establishing of a new service, and extension of a current service are all eligible for these grants



¹ <https://www.hklaw.com/en/insights/publications/2021/08/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act-summary>

- A program that would provide, on a competitive basis, Federal financial assistance to States, Native American tribes, local governmental units, and public utility commissions to demonstrate: (1) innovative approaches to transmission, storage, and distribution infrastructure to harden and enhance resilience and reliability; and (2) new approaches to enhance regional grid resilience for \$5 Billion
- Specific direction to the Department of Energy (DOE) to study capacity constraints and congestion when designating National Interest Electric Corridors
- Specific direction to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to issue permits for construction or modification of certain interstate transmission facilities if a state commission withholds or denies an application seeking approval for the siting of such facilities
- Specific direction to FERC to initiate a rulemaking to address the effectiveness of the existing planning process for interregional transmission and make any needed changes
- A Transmission Facilitation Program that would provide a \$2.5 billion revolving loan fund to allow the DOE to serve as an “anchor tenant” for a new transmission line or an upgrade of an existing line²

The legislation would also create a new Federal entity, called a Grid Deployment Authority housed in the DOE to support creative financing tools and leverage existing rights-of-way (e.g., highways, roads, and railways) for a new transmission. (<https://www.utilitydive.com/news/white-house-agrees-to-bipartisan-infrastructure-deal-with-73b-in-power-gri/602418/>)

The House of Representatives will take up this legislation upon return from its recess in September.

² <https://static.politico.com/7e/74/659737a14980a049b2b233aa43c9/bif-summary.pdf/>