



Information Alert

State-Federal Relations Division

June 26, 2020

House Leadership Unveils \$1.5 Trillion Infrastructure Package

House leadership unveiled a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure package that is expected to pass early next month. While the largest pot of the funding would be allocated to transportation, the bill also provides hundreds of billions of dollars for ports, drinking water, clean energy, environment and public lands as well areas outside this committee's jurisdiction including schools, broadband and healthcare. The bill is not expected to be addressed by the Senate, so enactment remains highly unlikely at this time. Below is a quick overview of major sections covered by this committee. If you have any questions or would like further details on specific areas, please reach out to NCSL staff Ben Husch (ben.husch@ncsl.org | 202-624-7779) or Kristen Hildreth (kristen.hildreth@ncsl.org | 202-624-3597).

Roads, Highways and Transit

The bill incorporates the [INVEST Act](#), previously approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, that reauthorizes federal surface transportation programs for five years, through FY 2024, as current program authorizations expire Sept. 30, 2020. Overall, the INVEST Act would provide nearly \$500 billion, including:

- \$319 billion for federal-aid highway programs.
- \$105 billion for transit.
- \$60 billion for passenger rail.
- \$5.3 billion for highway safety.
- \$4.6 billion for motor carrier safety.

Although the bill does not alter the current funding formulas, it does create a raft of new discretionary grant programs as opposed to formula programs that provide predictability and stability for states. Read NCSL's info alerts for a [deep dive into the provisions of the INVEST Act](#) or the corresponding bill in the Senate, [America's Transportation Infrastructure Act \(ATIA\)](#), which was passed unanimously out of committee in July 2019.

One major provision included in this bill, but not in the INVEST Act is language authorizing a transfer of \$145.3 billion from the general fund to the Highway Trust Fund to "pay-for" the

increased funding amounts without a corresponding increase in federal motor fuel tax rates, which provide the bulk of revenue for the trust fund.

Auto Safety

The bill also contains a title focused on automobile safety that includes changes to a host of traffic safety programs run by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), which provides qualifying states with additional federal funds. Further, the bill includes many provisions aimed at preventing deaths from hot cars, keyless ignition, drunk and distracted driving. These provisions center around requiring new federal motor vehicle safety standards that would mandate a suite of crash-avoidance technology in all new passenger vehicles, such as collision warnings, automatic braking, headlight glare, and more. The bill would also require new vehicles be able to detect the presence of a person in the backseat and provide a specific warning.

Airports

The bill provides \$17 billion in new federal funding for airports through the [Airport and Airway Trust Fund](#) that can be used by airports for an expanded list of eligible projects as well as new authority for the secretary of transportation to allow airports to implement financing techniques with federal funds.

Ports

The bill would make changes to the [Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund \(HMTF\)](#), which funds the operation and maintenance of federal ports and harbors. It provides Congress the authority to appropriate additional funds for harbor maintenance needs from the existing Trust Fund balance, which currently stands at \$10 billion. Additionally, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would receive \$10 billion to complete a backlog of previously authorized water resources development projects, with \$3 billion used for the Inland Waterways System.

The bill would separately create a \$500 million annual program through FY 2030 to encourage zero emissions ports infrastructure, and to aid ports in developing clean energy microgrids onsite to power their facilities.

Water Resources and Water-Related Infrastructure

Overall, the bill would allocate \$46.5 billion for water infrastructure projects and an additional \$2.5 billion for several regional infrastructure investments, including the Chesapeake Bay, the Puget Sound, the Great Lakes and the Long Island Sound, among others.

Of these funds, the [Clean Water State Revolving Fund \(CWSRF\)](#) would be provided \$40 billion—\$8 billion annually—for FY 2021-FY 2025. The CWSRF program is a federal-state partnership that provides communities low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. The bill makes a variety of additional changes to the CWSRF program ranging from increasing efficient energy use to requiring states dole out additional funding to municipalities. To promote efficient energy use, the bill amends the Clean Water Act to require utilities utilizing the state revolving funds to consider modifications that promote efficient energy.

The bill also would make \$1.5 billion available over FY 2021-FY 2025 via state grants to assist in implementing state water quality improvement programs. There would also be available up to

\$1 billion in grants over five years for states to establish programs that manage and control pollution added from nonpoint sources to navigable waters, and groundwater quality protection activities to advance implementation of such programs.

The bill includes \$25 billion in funding for the [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund](#). Relatedly, the bill would authorize the Environmental Protection Agency to award up to \$200 million annually to owners and operators of publicly owned treatment works to implement permit limits for discharge of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), or other emerging pollutants as identified by the administrator.

The bill also addresses water scarcity and drought issues in the West by appropriating \$3.5 billion for western water infrastructure and drought resiliency measures. Within that amount is funding for water storage projects, water recycling and reuse projects, and water desalination projects.

Environment and Public Lands

The bill tackles several environmental and public-lands related issues. This includes authorizing \$2 billion over five years to help address orphaned oil and gas wells on public lands, reauthorization of the [abandoned coal mines program](#) for 15 years, and promotion of renewable energy projects on public lands. Brownfield funding authorizations would be expanded to clean up former industrial or commercial sites where future use is affected by real or perceived environmental contamination. Funding to increase access to greenspace and recreational infrastructure in park-poor urban and underserved communities is also provided.

Clean Energy and Grid Modernization

Overall, the bill would invest more than \$70 billion to modernize the electric grid to accommodate additional renewable energy, strengthen existing infrastructure, help develop an electric vehicle charging network, and support energy efficiency, weatherization and smart communities infrastructure.

Within this total, the bill would establish a program to provide \$700 million each year from FY 2021-FY 2025 to fund eligible partners for projects that improve resiliency, performance, or efficiency of the electricity grid. Further, the bill promotes the deployment of green energy technology while providing new incentives for activities that reduce carbon pollution by building on existing tax incentives. The bill focuses on establishing a \$1 billion home energy savings retrofit rebate program, energy improvements in public school facilities with a focus on high-need and rural educational agencies and expanding the weatherization assistance program. It would also authorize \$2 billion annually over five years for state and local governments and private entities to expand electric vehicle infrastructure, as well as provide an additional \$2.5 billion annually over the same time period for large-scale projects to electrify the transportation sector.

Low-income and underserved communities would be supported through a program to provide \$200 million annually for FY 2021- FY 2025 with loans and grants to construct or install community solar facilities at multi-family affordable housing.

Important Resources

[Bill Text](#)

[Section by Section Summary](#)

[Fact sheet](#)