

Federal Infrastructure Investment Legislation

The Senate is taking the lead on President Trump's effort to move a massive infrastructure package through Congress. Senate Republican leadership is moving forward with plans that could serve as the building blocks for negotiations on the President's initiative following the first glimpse of [Trump's \\$1 trillion infrastructure proposal](#) (page 19) this week. The president's budget proposal, which was released Tuesday, set aside \$200 billion for infrastructure investment over the next 10 years.

Wyoming's Senator Barrasso, Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, has held six infrastructure hearings to date in his committee and has entertained streamlining the permitting process, public-private partnership funding schemes, and the role for the private sector in infrastructure development. And U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao recently gave his committee updates on Trump's rebuilding plan during her first congressional testimony, saying a detailed legislative package won't be unveiled until sometime in the "third quarter."

A [Fact Sheet](#) on the infrastructure plan states:

- The President's target of \$1 trillion in infrastructure investment will be funded through a combination of new Federal funding, incentivized non-Federal funding, and newly prioritized and expedited projects
- While this Administration proposes additional funding for infrastructure, we will structure that funding to incentivize additional non-Federal funding, reduce the cost associated with accepting Federal dollars, and ensure Federal funds are leveraged such that the end result is at least \$1 trillion in total infrastructure spending

South Dakota's Senator Thune, Chairman of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee and third in Senate Republican seniority, said President Trump's budget takes the "longterm view" on infrastructure, and noted "federal funding is part of the equation and, as the initiative lays out, in the appropriate circumstances we also need to leverage private-sector capital and reform regulations that inflate project costs."

Members of the Senate Environment and Public Works and Commerce, Science and Transportation Committees seem to agree that the President's infrastructure pledge is a step in the right direction, but now it is incumbent upon them to advance legislation that addresses water infrastructure, ports, bridges, roads and other public works. **One reassuring sentiment from Senator Barrasso is that he is adamant about ensuring that rural infrastructure needs are targeted in any rebuilding package.**

Now, the question is, can Republicans govern and compromise on the other items on their legislative agenda including healthcare, tax reform, the debt ceiling and appropriations to fund government operations after September 30th? As of today, there are a mere 41 working days left of the congressional calendar in FY2017.