



# Building America Back Better Biden's Agenda is Working for the IBEW

*How President Biden's actions benefit working families and IBEW members*

## PRESSING CONGRESS TO PASS THE BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA

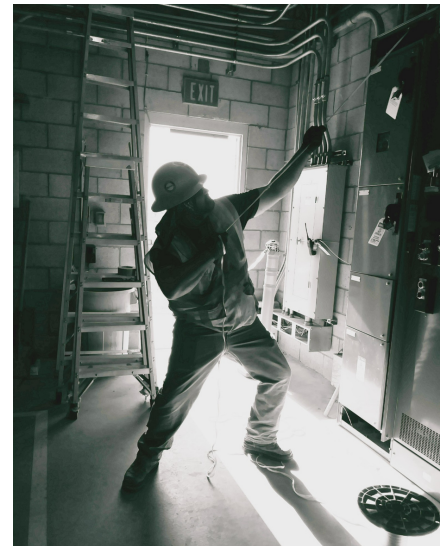
Historic and transformational change for America's infrastructure and jobs is the order of the day on Capitol Hill as negotiators seek to construct legislation containing President Biden's bold plan for America.

At issue are plans to build the charging infrastructure necessary for widescale adoption of electric vehicles, buses, trains and trucks and create hundreds of thousands of jobs in roads, transit, the electrical grid, passenger and freight rail, broadband and water infrastructure.

After President Biden helped negotiate it, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed the Senate and is now under consideration by the House of Representatives. Negotiators are also working on the Budget Reconciliation package, the administration's and congressional Democrats' proposal for "human infrastructure."

Both of these bills have the potential to impact a large swath of IBEW membership and their families.

*President Stephenson and Government Affairs Department staff are actively lobbying on these negotiations, which are fluctuating daily. Please look for updates in next month's issue of this newsletter, on [ibew.org](https://ibew.org) and in the [Electrical Worker](#).*



*The Biden Build Back Better plan will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, many in IBEW-represented industries.*

## CALLING IBEW MEMBERS 'THE BEST IN THE WORLD,' BIDEN TALKS RENEWABLES AT DOE SITE

It was almost déjà vu when Denver Local 68 journeyman wireman Julian Aguilar met President Biden at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory on September 14 outside Denver.

"I know I just now met Joe Biden for the first time in my life, but I feel like he's had my back for years," said Aguilar, [a second-generation member of Local 68](#). "President Joe Biden is not just pro-union. He's pro-people. He's pro-America."

Biden saluted IBEW electricians as "the best in the world," as he thanked Aguilar and discussed the urgency of renewable energy.

"Whether you're an engineer at a lab bench, an IBEW worker working on a turbine, [whether] you work for a power company or a small construction business, everyone has a role to play in building a clean energy future and a stronger economy," Biden said at the Department of Energy site where Local 68 members are at work on a solar installation project. Colorado Gov. Jared Polis joined them.

Biden championed his bold, job-creating infrastructure plan, as Congress was continuing negotiations over it.



Denver Local 68 journeyman wireman Julian Aguilar with President Biden and Colorado Gov. Jared Polis in September.

"The bill will put 800,000 people to work," Biden said, "800,000, including plumbers, pipefitters, electrical workers, steelworkers — modernizing roads, bridges, water systems, broadband systems.

"[It] contains the largest federal investment in power transmission in our history, so that our grid is more reliable, and we can carry more renewable energy [and] we can create good union jobs building that new grid."

In attendance at the DOE site were dignitaries, energy executives and IBEW members.

"Being here at NREL shows the future of our industry, renewable and sustainable energy," Aguilar said in his introduction:

*Smart grids, wind farms, and solar farms are just a few examples here in our great state of Colorado. When you see all these new technologies, you might think that the future doesn't look much like the past.*

*But one thing the past and future will have in common is they will be built by unions. I know that's the future that President Biden, and my IBEW brothers and sisters are working hard to build every day.*

## RELYING ON IBEW'S CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE EXPERTISE TO MAKE EV TARGET

President Biden signed an executive order targeting 2030 as the year that half of all passenger vehicles sold in the U.S. by 2030 will be electric.

He was joined by auto company executives in the August 5 [White House announcement](#), when he emphasized the transformative infrastructure potential of his Build Back Better plan.

"We're going to put Americans to work modernizing our roads, our highways, our ports, our airports, rail and transit systems," Biden said at the event. "That includes putting IBEW members and other union workers to work installing a national network of 500,000 charging stations along our roads and highways and at our homes and our apartments."

The effort is already underway, with plans to convert the federal government's 600,000-vehicle fleet to electric.

At an October event in Michigan, [President Biden pressed Congress](#) to pass his agenda, saying, "To support these investments is to create a rising America...To oppose these investments is to be complicit in America's decline." He continued:

*The whole world knows that the future of the auto industry is electric. We need to make sure America builds that future instead of falling behind. We should build those vehicles and the batteries to get them here in the United States of America ... I want those jobs here in Michigan, not halfway around the globe. That's what my plan will do. The infrastructure bill will put in motion the union workers on the job installing a national network of hundreds of thousands of charging stations along our roads and highways and communities.*



IBEW members are being trained to safely install the electric vehicle charging infrastructure necessary to support the expected EV boom.

IBEW is participating in an industry coalition to ensure only certified electricians are installing the electric vehicle charging network. The curriculum is called EVITP (the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program) and it seeks to standardize the buildout of the EV charging infrastructure.



## KEEPING UP THE MOMENTUM ON WHITE HOUSE PRO-WORKER TASK FORCE

A high-level committee headed by Vice President Kamala Harris continues its investigation into leveraging the federal government's power to promote unions and collective bargaining. An [October meeting](#) included Labor Secretary Marty Walsh, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland, Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm.

The group is at work on a report expected to be completed in late October.

"This unprecedented task force – involving almost all of the highest-ranking people in the executive branch – is President Biden's most comprehensive approach yet to lift up workers and unions," President Stephenson said upon the launch of the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment in April. "The magnitude of his efforts can't be overstated. We've literally never seen anything like it."

In June, Vice President Harris and Secretary Walsh held the first task force meeting at Pittsburgh Local 5's union hall, and heard from Local 5 organizer Bill Garner and members of other unions.

### ON THIS LABOR DAY, THE IBEW...

*Thanks President Biden for promoting unions, encouraging organizing and increasing worker power*

"This task force is President Biden's most comprehensive approach yet to lift up workers and unions. The magnitude of his efforts can't be overstated. We've literally never seen anything like it."

**- INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT LONNIE R. STEPHENSON**

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## LEANING INTO NUCLEAR AS PART OF AMERICA'S CARBON-FREE STRATEGY

IBEW President Lonnie R. Stephenson wrote in an op-ed that the Biden administration's climate goals will be met only by expanding nuclear energy production.

With co-author Steven Nesbit of the American Nuclear Society, Stephenson said provisions in the infrastructure bill being debated in Congress that would prevent permanent closures of existing nuclear power plants are a welcome first step.

Through measures like production tax credits, President Biden can safeguard America's largest carbon-free energy source by recognizing the clean air contributions of nuclear energy:

*By building new reactors at old fossil fuel-fired power plants, President Biden can ensure reliable clean energy and high-paying jobs for working families across the country.*

*Nuclear energy is the resilient bedrock of our power grid, [supplying](#) around 20% of America's electricity and 52% of our carbon-free electricity.*

*Thanks to nuclear power's unique capabilities, it complements renewables and carbon capture by shoring up the power grid's reliability without increasing emissions. Fuel-secured reactors produce dispatchable, carbon-free baseload power 24/7, which is essential for keeping the lights on during winter storms, heat waves and hurricanes.*

*The inclusion of nuclear alongside renewables and carbon capture will be necessary if we're to decarbonize our economy rapidly and cost-effectively.*

The Energy Futures Initiative says nuclear workers have the highest wages within the energy sector, earning an average of \$47 per hour.



In October, Nuclear Regulatory Commission chief [Jeff Baran traveled to the Braidwood](#) nuclear power plant in Illinois, represented by Downers Grove Local 15.

Not surprisingly, nuclear is the most heavily unionized part of the energy sector and its most diverse. Thirty-six percent of the workforce are women and 34% are people identifying as a racial and ethnic minorities.



*Diablo Canyon in California is among several carbon-free, baseload-producing nuclear power facilities that have closed in recent years.*

## ADDRESSING WAGE THEFT IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Labor Secretary Marty Walsh participated in a roundtable on October 13 at Atlanta Local 613 that focused on low wages and other workplace issues harmful to workers. At the event, Rep. Nikema Williams said workers lose \$15 billion annually to wage theft, and highlighted the U.S. Department of Labor's work to prevent it.

"I'm glad to work with you and the U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division in enforcing the Standard Act so Georgia workers get the pay they are due," [Williams said to Secretary Walsh](#).

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