



INFRASTRUCTURE & TAXES TALKING POINTS

May 13, 2019

TOPLINE MESSAGE: President Trump and Democratic leaders in Congress have proposed to invest \$2 trillion to rebuild infrastructure. The \$2 trillion cost is about the cost of the Trump-GOP tax cuts, which mostly benefited the wealthy and big corporations. President Trump needs to tell the American people how he proposes to pay for the \$2 trillion plan. He should not require working families to pick up the tab—either by cutting services people depend on or by raising their taxes. Instead, these vital investments in America’s future should be paid for by closing tax loopholes and ending tax special breaks that allow the wealthy and big corporations to avoid paying their fair share of taxes.

1. President Trump and House and Senate Democratic leaders recently agreed to make a \$2 trillion investment over 10 years to upgrade America’s crumbling infrastructure.

Beyond funding, there is no agreement on substance. There is an emerging framework in the House that was recently introduced with 90 sponsors. [House Concurrent Resolution 36](#) outlines 10 principles for any spending on infrastructure, with a broad focus on fixing crumbling roads, bridges, ports, water and sewer pipes, while investing in clean energy technology and green jobs to fight global climate change.

2. Such a bold public investment is urgently needed and long overdue.

- America’s civil engineers give the current condition of our infrastructure a [nearly failing grade of D+](#). They estimate it will cost an [extra \\$2 trillion over the next 10 years](#) to get our infrastructure up to acceptable levels and maintain global competitiveness.
- Repairing, improving and expanding the nation’s infrastructure—from highways to mass transit, clean energy technology to water systems, schools to broadband—would create millions of good-paying green jobs and fight global climate change.

3. There is no agreement about how to pay for the \$2 trillion in new investments given past Republican opposition to raising taxes.

- The \$2 trillion cost of the infrastructure plan is about [equal to the cost of the Trump-GOP tax cuts](#) that were rammed through Congress in 2017 and mostly benefited the rich and corporations.
- Republicans have no trouble giving away trillions in tax cuts to wealthy special-interest donors, but when it comes to services that benefit working families—such as rebuilding infrastructure—they say we don’t have the money and can’t increase the deficit.
- So, Democratic leaders have challenged President Trump to come up with a funding plan by May 21, when they next meet. The clock is ticking for the president to put real money on the table.

4. **One good way to pay for these vital investments in America's future is to close tax loopholes and end special tax breaks that allow the wealthy and big corporations to avoid paying their fair share of taxes.**
 - Given the huge tax cuts given to the wealthy and corporations from the Trump-GOP tax law, working families should be the last to have to contribute to an infrastructure plan.
 - The wealthy and big corporations have benefitted the most from America's public infrastructure and they have the most to give. Therefore, they should contribute the most to bringing that infrastructure back up to par.

5. **Senate Democrats have proposed a [\\$1 trillion infrastructure plan](#) that is fully paid for by rolling back just a few of the biggest tax giveaways in the Trump-GOP law that benefited the wealthy and corporations.**

6. **There are many options for raising \$2 trillion from the wealthy and big corporations, including requiring profitable companies like Amazon that greatly benefit from American infrastructure to contribute to needed improvements.** A [report by Americans for Tax Fairness](#) identifies about 40 options, which could raise trillions of dollars from the wealthy and well-connected. They include:
 - Assessing a small tax on extraordinary wealth above \$50 million, as proposed by Senator Elizabeth Warren. It could raise well over \$2 trillion.
 - Placing a surtax of 10% on families with incomes of at least \$2 million, which could raise up to \$800 billion.
 - Taxing wealth more like work so that the the tax rate paid by the wealthy on their income from investments matches the much higher tax rate paid on wages and salaries. This could raise over \$2 trillion.
 - Taxing Wall Street trades by just ten cents on every \$100 traded. It could raise \$800 billion and slow the dangerous, high-frequency trading that destabilizes the stock market.

7. **Trump's infrastructure plan should not require working families to pick up the tab—either by cutting services people depend on or by raising their taxes.** Instead, these vital investments in America's future could be paid for by closing tax loopholes and ending special tax breaks that allow the wealthy and big corporations to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. Any new plan should not be paid for with new tax breaks or other public subsidies that leverage private capital or unduly reward speculative investors.