

[View in browser](#)[Tips & Tricks](#)[Resources](#)[Infrastructure](#)[Misleading](#)[Headline](#)

Good morning. Welcome to NonPolars first newsletter edition! Through this Newsletter, you will be able to hone your critical thinking skills, develop a greater understanding of your own political beliefs, and begin your journey towards helping us (little by little) improve political discourse and trust between opposing parties. It starts with you!

This week we'll be discussing Biden's major policy agenda: Build Back Better.

But first, do you wish you knew how to diffuse an awkward political conversation? Try out these tips and tricks next time you talk to a friend, coworker, or family member about politics.

Tips and Tricks

[Tips for having productive political discussions:](#)

1. **Look for shared values.** Move beyond where you stand on specific policy positions. Try to identify shared values, such as your support of an inclusive society or the pursuit of the American dream.
2. **Know when to redirect.** If your trusted experts are different and there are no shared facts, healthy discussion may not be possible. In that case, it's best to redirect the conversation.
3. **Don't Assume** people won't know more than you about a perspective or experience, even if it is one that you share.

Resources for media bias

Feeling stuck in the spin zone? Check the link below to identify media bias in your news feed.

Types of media bias and how to spot it:

- <https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/how-to-spot-types-of-media-bias>

What is the Infrastructure Bill?

Overview

Since he has taken office, President Biden has framed legislative focus on his [Build Back Better](#) Agenda. Build Back Better is a three part plan focusing on: COVID-19 relief, American infrastructure, as well as childcare and education. The Biden Administration hopes to apply ambitious policy that will create jobs and help Americans recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This three-phase policy agenda has been the topic of discussion since Biden first entered office, but it has been a tedious and tense process. Let's take a look at the numbers of each phase of Biden's policy:

<u>Bill:</u>	<u>Cost:</u>	<u>Status:</u>
American Rescue Plan	\$1.9 Trillion	Passed House and Senate
American Jobs Plan (physical infrastructure plan)	\$550 Billion	Passed Senate
American Families Plan (reconciliation plan)	\$3.5 Trillion	Waiting in Senate

- The first part of the agenda, the 1.9T [American Rescue Plan](#), was passed in March of 2021 to address issues "directly related to the health crisis" as well as the "economic crisis that the health crisis has created." (NPR)
- The second portion of the plan, the American Jobs Plan (commonly referred to as the **bipartisan** or **physical** infrastructure bill), was passed by the Senate on August 10th. This bill includes \$550 billion in added funding for [highways and other public infrastructure projects](#). However, some progressive democrats opposing the bill could prevent it from passing in the House of Representatives. Why?
- **Because the bill is being leveraged against its successor, The American Families Plan.** This bill, also known as the Reconciliation or "Human Infrastructure" Bill (from here we will refer to it as the AFP), is a 3.5T democrat-backed piece of legislation that will increase federal spending in childcare, community college, healthcare and more; the bill is based on increased taxes for high-income citizens and investors. It faces a similar roadblock as the bipartisan bill: a handful of [centrist Democrats](#) in the Senate.
- **This has caused some lawmakers to cross partisan lines:** centrist Democrats like Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema may vote with Republicans against the reconciliation bill if the bipartisan agreement does not pass. On the other side of the coin, progressive democrats and Speaker of the House [Nancy Pelosi](#) have remained unflinching in their opposing stance of voting down the bipartisan plan should the reconciliation bill not make it through the House. 3 house republicans will also be expected to vote in favor of reconciliation.

Watch Below: CBS This Morning overview of the infrastructure and reconciliation bills



What is Being Debated Now?

- As of [yesterday](#), Senator Schumer met with moderate democratic senators to craft a new proposal on the social welfare bill by next week. He hopes this will make progressives comfortable with approving the infrastructure bill, as social welfare is a huge portion of the Reconciliation bill.
- Almost all Republicans [oppose this bill](#), arguing the spending will fuel inflation while criticizing the increased taxes.
- "If the [\\$3.5 trillion reconciliation](#) push dies, there will be more GOP support," said centrist Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.), referring to the filibuster-proof process Democrats are using for their separate social spending bill.

The Bigger Picture

While the physical infrastructure and reconciliation bills are comprehensive, complex and filled with jargon, the passing of these pieces of legislation have implications that will effect the rest of President Biden's first term.

- The lack of movement of Biden's "Build Back Better" plan in Congress has multiple ramifications outside of just Biden's policy agenda. The Democrats feel pressure to pass this legislation [before midterms](#), and while Democrats still hold control of Congress.
- If the reconciliation bill is unable to pass by the [Sept. 27th](#) deadline set by Speaker Pelosi, major changes will have to be made for it to pass at all.

Headline Rewriter

We are inundated with news alerts, headlines, and bits of information. Oftentimes, we never consider the validity of the information that passes by us each day. So, each week NonPolar will feature a headline we feel is misleading and contextualize them.

- Did you know? Editors often select titles for their issues articles, not the authors themselves

Headline: [The spike in gun violence continues, with 2021 on pace to be the worst year in decades](#)

While the number of homicides during the first quarter of 2021 surpassed previous highs, the homicide rate greatly decreased during the second quarter which the body of the article reveals. Thus, while the gun violence rate for 2021 overall has been very high, the claim that the "spike in gun violence" has continued is misleading. Headlines such as this one actually contribute to a rise in gun purchases by generating more fear.

Our Headline: Spike in gun violence has subsided from start of 2021

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