

February 2022 Issue

MTA Newsletter

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Your Weekly guide to everything happening on the Hill



Infrastructure Bill

February 1, 2022

Biden recently passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill which aims to increase investment in high-speed internet access, public transportation, better roadways, and green energy sources. There are over 375 programs in the infrastructure law. And it is one of the largest federal investment bills, with around \$1.2 trillion dollars allocated to federal funding. There are twelve official issue areas indicated in the bill, and each one has specifics when it comes to funding and goals. Each state is being given a portion of funding to allocate to federal contractors based on issue area. There are special grant programs for specific areas and groups including local/rural grants, tribal grants, and grants for minority owned and small owned businesses. To read more about the bill [click here](#).



Inside, we also
talk about:

Black History
Month- 2
Minimum
Wage, Stop-gap
bill-3

MTA will be hosting a roundtable event and inviting speakers to discuss the broadband portion of the bill and help MTA members navigate and learn about grant funding associated with this new bill. This event is invitation only so if you would like to participate, please email [Tonya Saunders here](#) to sign up.

Black History Month

BIPOC Benefit as Minimum Wage Increases

January 21, 2022

The recently implemented minimum wage increase is predicted to greatly benefit BIPOC federal contractors. With the increase, BIPOC federal contractors are expected to see as much as a \$3,500 increase in pay per year. Out of the 390,000 expected to receive an increase in pay, 200,000 of them are black or brown and 187,000 are women. The difference between Biden's order and previous ones put in place is that this executive order would apply to both new and existing federal contracts, meaning compliance will be required whether a contract is new or 10 years old. This bill is predicted to help promote economic advancement especially for minority contractors. For more information on how this order affects minority contractors [click here](#).

Black-owned Businesses experience growth

February 2, 2022

There has been tremendous growth of black owned businesses in the past five years. The SBA alone has given out \$9 million more to Black-owned businesses in just the past five years and when it comes to black-owned federal contract companies, contract amounts have increased by \$22 million. African American entrepreneurs are thriving, especially in places like the New Black Wall Street, located in Stonecrest, Georgia, which is home to over 100 black owned businesses. While there is still a lot to be done to increase equity among black owned businesses and contracting for minority firms, there is also a lot of joy in seeing such an increase in investment among minority owned, especially black-owned businesses. [Click here](#) to read more. To learn more about the New Black Wall Street [click here](#).

Affected workers and wage increases for a federal contractor minimum wage of \$15 in 2022, by demographic group

Affected contract jobs (thousands)	
Overall	390
Black or Hispanic	200
Women	187
Average annual increase in pay for year-round workers (2021\$)	
Overall	\$3,100
Black or Hispanic	\$3,500
Women	\$3,100
Total annual increase in pay for year-round workers (millions, 2021\$)	
Overall	\$1,190
Black or Hispanic	\$692
Women	\$584

Source: Authors' analysis using FY2020 federal contract obligations from USA Spending; input-output tables from 2019 BLS employment requirements data and EPI Minimum Wage Simulation Model results.



STOP-Gap Bill

February 8, 2022

The House, this last week passed a stop-gap bill that would extend federal appropriations for an additional 3 weeks. Federal appropriations were scheduled to end February 18th, and since the Senate has not passed a new appropriations bill, federal funding would have ended, shutting down the government until a bill could be passed. This bill is partially stopped due to legislators not allocating a defense and non-defense budget for the fiscal year, which must be done before the 12 appropriations can be passed. It is vital that these bills be passed. 9 out of the 12 bills have passed in the House, but none have passed in the Senate. The cause of this due to differing opinions on what funding should look like. Many Republicans want to have a full-year CR, a continuing resolution of last years appropriations budgets. Democrats on the other hand think that a bill should produce line-by-line funding, or where every appropriation is looked at and changed accordingly. Overall, it will be important to watch and see if an appropriations bill is passed in the next couple of weeks, otherwise we might be looking at a governmental shutdown. To read more about the stop-gap bill [click here](#). To read more about the appropriation bills [click here](#).

Minimum Wage in the Courts

February 10, 2022

As discussed in the January Newsletter, Biden signed an executive order to increase minimum wage for federal workers to \$15 starting at the end of this past month. Recently three attorney generals, in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, have challenged the order and have filed a federal lawsuit claiming that Biden did not have the authority to issue the EO. The states allege that the executive order is unconstitutional and violates administrative law. There is not yet a hearing date announced. For more information [click here](#). To read more about the executive order [click here](#).



PRICE Act

February 8, 2022

The Promoting Rigorous and Innovative Cost Efficiencies for Federal Procurement and Acquisitions, or PRICE Act, is a piece of legislation that's aim is to improve government contracting opportunities for small businesses. It passed in the House on February 7th and awaits a signature from President Biden. This bill would require the Department of Homeland Security to compile and publish a report annually on "innovative procurement techniques" that were used by successful projects. This would inform small businesses on techniques that they could use for procurement and would level the playing field when it comes to competing for federal contracts. There are five main goals of the legislation.

Goals:

- Improving or encouraging better competition,
- Reducing time to award,
- Achieving cost savings,
- Achieving better mission outcomes, or
- Meeting goals for contracts awarded to small business concerns

Ultimately, this bill would greatly benefit small contractors and even the playing field. To read more [click here](#). To read the bill [click here](#).



PLA Executive Order

February 3, 2022

An executive order has been signed by the President that will require the use of project labor agreements, PLAs, on federal construction projects above \$35 million. The aim is to alleviate management and coordination challenges that can prevent progress of major construction projects. This order is projected to affect \$262 billion in federal contracts and improve job quality for almost 200,000 employees. It is predicted to improve efficiency of federal procurement. This order will only apply to provisions in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that are considered to be direct procurement, excluding projects financed through grants to non-federal firms. This bill will benefit contractors by alleviating the coordination challenges, raising quality standards for contractors, reducing uncertainty, and increasing training for the federal contracting workforce. To read more [click here](#).

SBA Journey 6, e-learning service

February 7, 2022

Woman entrepreneurs start and own half of all business in the United States, with over 9.4 million employed workers, and over \$1.9 trillion in revenue generated, women are a resounding force in the business industry. SBA has recently made Journey 6, an e-learning service, to help educate women business on potential opportunities to expand their businesses in government contracting. There are 6 components to the service to help with this endeavor and it has proven to be effective with over 30,000 women using the platform in the last year. For more information [click here](#). To sign up for Journey 6 [click here](#).

WHITE HOUSE TASK FORCE ON WORKER ORGANIZING AND EMPOWERMENT

REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT



Worker Organizing and Empowerment

February 7, 2022

Recently, a report by the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment was released. This report detailed nearly 70 recommendations on how to promote worker organizing and collective bargaining for both the public and private sector. The U.S. Department of Labor will help implement these recommendations across agencies. Some recommendations include:

- Ensuring workers know their organizing and bargaining rights.
- Protecting workers who face illegal retaliation when they organize and stand up for workplace rights.
- Establishing a resource center on unions and collective bargaining.
- Shedding light on employer's use of anti-union consultants.
- Collecting and reporting more information on unions and their role in the U.S. economy.
- Advancing equity across underserved communities by supporting worker organizing and collective bargaining.

To read more [click here](#). To read the full report by the White House task force [click here](#).

Things to look for in the coming months:

- *Minimum Wage ruling*
- *Government funding appropriations*
- *Vaccine Mandates*
- *Build Back Better Act*



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