

President Biden's American Jobs Plan Calls for Significant Funding for Worker-Focused Agencies

By Monica L. Frantz

Workplace civil rights and health and safety agencies will likely receive additional funding to carry out anti-bias enforcement under President Biden's American Jobs Plan.

Last month, President Biden announced his administration's \$2 trillion American Jobs Plan, a public investment aimed at creating millions of jobs, rebuilding the country's infrastructure, and strengthening economic competitiveness. One of the stated goals of the American Jobs Plan is to make a generational investment in racial justice through programs aimed at combating disparities in health, safety, and access to opportunity.

In his plan, President Biden is calling upon Congress to provide the federal government with the tools needed to ensure employers are providing workers with fair and equal pay, safe and healthy workplaces, and workplaces free from racial, gender, and other forms of discrimination and harassment. The plan specifically calls for a \$10 billion investment in enforcement as part of the plan's workforce proposals. This will likely result in more resources for civil rights agencies like the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to carry out anti-bias enforcement. More funding will allow the EEOC to address worker discrimination complaints at a faster pace. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), which is notoriously understaffed, will likely see additional funding as well, which would allow for more efficient processing of investigations into workplace safety and health violations. In addition to more funding for enforcement, the President is calling for increased penalties for employer violations of workplace safety and health rules.

While bill text for the American Jobs Plan is not yet available, the pledge for more funding for worker-focused agencies signals that the Biden administration intends to devote significant resources to keeping employers accountable for advancing health, safety, and equity in the workplace. Roetzel will continue to monitor developments as it relates to the American Jobs Plan. For more information and insight on this matter, please contact one of the listed Roetzel attorneys.

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