

US Daily: The Most Important Number in the Biden Budget (Phillips)

- President Biden released his budget proposal to Congress, which calls for an increase in the deficit of \$800bn over 10 years (0.3% of GDP over that period) to accommodate his “American Jobs Plan” (AJP) and “American Families Plan” (AFP). While the amount is not surprising, this is the first time the White House has formally shown the net effect of their proposals over the ten-year period Congress will use when it considers them.
- Those plans would raise spending by a total of \$4.4 trillion over ten years (1.5% of GDP over that period) and increase tax revenues by \$3.6 trillion (1.3%). Congress will likely scale back many of these proposals; our current forecast is for a package of slightly more than \$3 trillion over 10 years, with tax increases of around half that amount, but we believe the risks lie modestly to the downside of those amounts.
- We expect congressional Democrats to pivot away from bipartisan infrastructure negotiations in the next couple of weeks and to begin to move forward with reconciliation legislation—requiring only Democratic support—that includes many of these proposals. House passage could come by July, but the Senate looks likely to take until September or October to act.

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The Most Important Number in the Biden Budget

The President's two signature fiscal packages would add \$800bn to the deficit over the next ten years. This figure is likely to be relevant to the congressional debate, as Democratic leaders will need to choose a dollar figure to include in a forthcoming budget resolution that directs the committees that will craft the fiscal package. Whatever figure they choose figure will set a limit on the reconciliation legislation that follows. In most recent budget resolutions, the directive has come in the form of a directive to increase the budget deficit by a certain amount. However, congressional leaders could also specify separate spending directives and tax directives. In either case, once the amount is set, the legislation that follows may not increase the deficit by more than directed. While congressional Democrats are free to choose a different amount, the Biden budget is the first formal indication from any of the key decision makers regarding how much they propose to increase the deficit to fund their proposals.

Most of the details in the budget were already previewed in White House releases over the last several weeks. The White House already announced the two major proposals, the AJP and AFP, several weeks ago, and there were few other policy proposals in the budget outside of those plans. For the most part, the specific figures in the budget match fairly closely with what the White House had already laid out. We summarize both plans in the table below.

Exhibit 1: The American Jobs and Families Plans

American Jobs Plan	\$bn/10yrs	American Families Plan	\$bn/10yrs
Transportation Infra	598	Universal pre-K and Head Start	165
Water	111	Higher education	280
Broadband	100	Child care	225
Power	98	Paid leave	225
Residential	281	Nutrition	48
Educ/Govt Infra	126	Extend expanded child credit 4 yrs	449
R&D	180	Make permanent expanded EITC	105
Supply chain	130	Make permanent expanded CDCTC	82
Manufacturing Incentives	169	Make permanent expanded PTCs	163
Clean energy incentives	368		
Medicaid	400		
Workforce development	87		
Total, new spending	2625	Total, new spending	1742
Repeal fossil fuel tax incentives	-35	Increase top marginal rate to 39.6%	-132
Reinstate superfund taxes	-25	Tax capital gains as ordinary income	-323
Raise corp tax rate to 28%	-858	Apply payroll taxes to S Corps and LPs	-237
Tighten GILTI tax	-534	Tax carried interest as ordinary income	-1
Tighten foreign oil/gas tax rules	-88	Repeal like-kind exchanges	-20
Replace BEAT tax	-390	Make permanent excess loss limitation	-43
Restrict excess interest deductions	-19		
15% global min tax on book income	-148		
Total, tax increases	-2096	Total, tax increases	-755
		Increase IRS enforcement funding	-245
		Require financial account reporting	-483
		Expand cryptocurrency/broker reporting	n/a
		Impose liability on shareholders for tax nonpayment	-5
		Other tax compliance	-5
		Total, tax compliance	-718
Total deficit effect	529	Total deficit effect	270

Source: White House Office of Management and Budget, Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

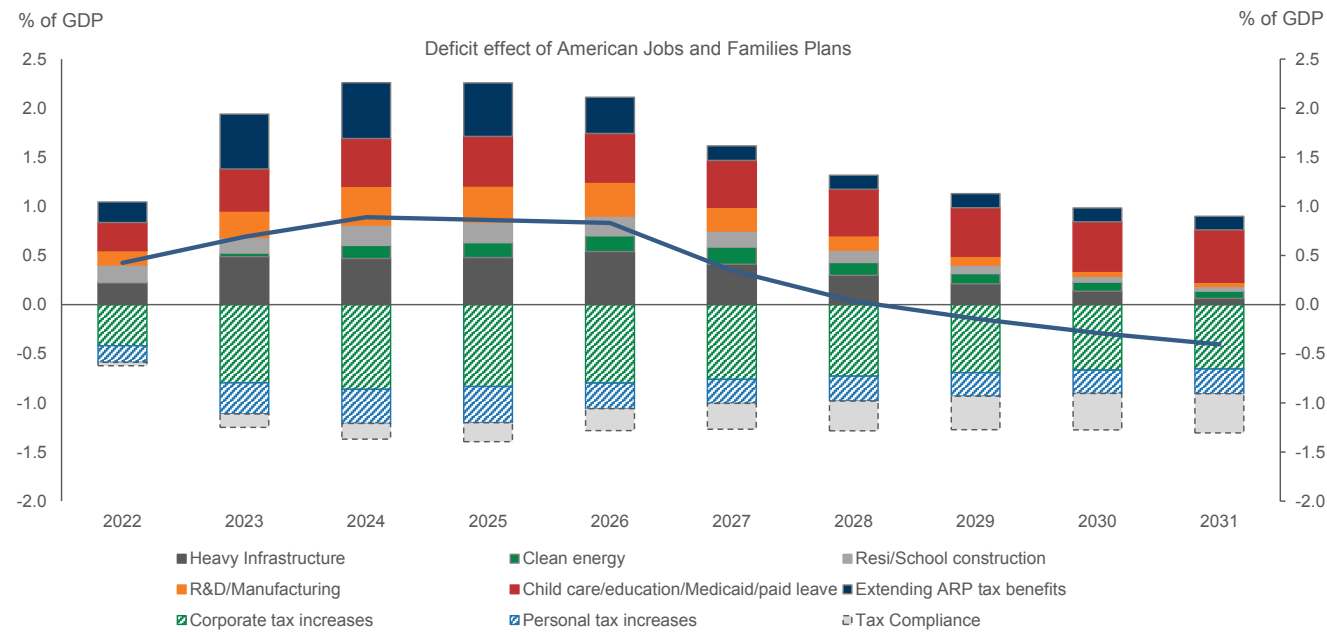
We expect Congress to scale back the proposal, with a risk that it is scaled back more than we have been expecting. Our forecast assumes that Congress enacts a

package of slightly more than \$3 trillion, with tax increases of around half this much. However, for the first time since the start of the pandemic, the risks to our fiscal assumptions appear skewed to the downside. If congressional leaders adopt the White House position that the total deficit impact of the forthcoming fiscal package should be kept to around \$800bn over ten years, this would mean that Congress would need to raise taxes more than we expect, or increase spending less than we expect.

With regard to taxes, we expect less than half of the Biden proposals to become law. Specifically, we assume Congress will pass a 25% corporate rate, rather than the 28% the White House proposes, and that congress will substantially scale back the corporate tax increases on international income. We expect the top marginal individual rate to increase as proposed, but believe the capital gains rate is more likely to settle around 28% and that the increase is unlikely to take effect retroactively, as there appears to be tepid support for a capital gains rate increase among some centrist Democrats and making the tax hike retroactive could reduce support further.

The budget highlights the smaller scale of any additional fiscal boost. The budget proposes to increase the deficit by \$118bn (0.5% of GDP) in FY2022, and \$224bn (0.9% of GDP) in FY2023. Spending would increase by more than this—\$265bn (1.1%) and \$530bn (2.2%)—but around half of this would be offset with tax increases. These are big numbers in a normal policy and economic environment, but this amounts to only a fraction, on an annual basis, of the fiscal support Congress has provided over the last year. The chart below shows the Biden Administration's estimate of the proposals effect on the budget deficit over the next ten years.

Exhibit 2: A net deficit increase of less than 1% of GDP over the next few years



Source: White House Office of Management and Budget, Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

We expect Congress to begin moving forward on these proposals next month.

Although bipartisan discussions on an infrastructure package are continuing, the already low odds of success appear to be dwindling further. With a nearly \$1.5 trillion gap between the White House's proposal and the Senate Republican offer, and even less overlap in how to finance the new spending, it is hard to see how a bipartisan agreement will come together. Instead, we expect congressional Democrats to move forward with one large reconciliation bill, requiring only 51 votes in the Senate, that encompasses both of President Biden's major proposals (the AJP and AFP). We assume that the House and Senate Budget Committees will begin to move forward with their respective budget resolutions by mid-June, which will lay the procedural groundwork for the reconciliation bill and, as described above, set a limit on the deficit impact. It is possible that the House will begin to pass legislation in committee in June, but we expect that full House passage of the actual reconciliation bill will take until July. The Senate could start on the bill in July, but passage in September or October looks more likely than July at this point.

Alec Phillips

Disclosure Appendix

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