

Infrastructure, Labor Standards & Opportunities for Co-Enforcement and Community Compliance Monitoring. *A session introduction with an overview of funding streams, where labor standards exist or can be won, and how community enforcement will be key to securing gains.*

Wednesday October 25th 1:30-3:00 EST

Panelists:

Janice Fine - *Workplace Justice Lab at Rutgers University*

Miranda Nelson - *Jobs to Move America*

Aquilina Soriano Versoza - *Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California*

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Over \$2 Trillion in Federal funding** to rebuild our nation's Infrastructure, transition to a green economy and strengthen domestic manufacturing is flowing into our states and cities over the next 10 years.
- This new funding is coming from the American Rescue Plan Act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act, Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) Act, and the Biden administration's general industrial policy.
- **This funding provides our biggest opportunity in decades to shape labor standards in the millions of jobs that will be created.**
- These bills send out money to companies/states/localities in a variety of ways. Some through grants to states or local governments, or companies. Some through formula funds (calculated by a formula for each state). Some money will flow directly to companies via tax credits (mostly IRA).
- **Formula funds and tax credits** come with requirements to enforce, Including prevailing wage. IRA also requires apprenticeships for construction workers. EO 11246 applies as well, setting up hiring goals. But these funds have less opportunities to ensure good jobs into the process compared to a grant.
- **A lot of competitive grants** from DoT. Incentivizing PLAs, local and targeted hiring, training investments through their grants. Local and targeted hiring is new to DoT. Language in bill permits this for the first time.
- Dept of Energy giving \$ directly to companies in form of grants or loan. Incentivizing labor standards by encouraging companies to describe community benefits plans when they apply.. Plans have companies describe job quality, community engagement, and encourage equity in hiring/training. Better plans are supposed to be given more points
- **Tracking the money.** Because there is so much money -- coming from various streams -- there is no one source to easily track how the money is flowing. It will require a research effort. We will share the sources we know of (see below.)

- **Community compliance monitoring** and organizing across multiple sectors of the economy will be essential to win these gains. Luckily, we have great models from the city and state level for co-enforcement programs that we can build from.
- **Co-enforcement**, is the idea of formal and sustained partnerships between agencies, community groups etc. to work together to ensure standards followed, ensure a floor, prevent high road contractors from being undercut and support organizing.
- Key lessons learned about successful co-enforcement programs are shared including the need for organizational capacity and buy-in, taking time to build relationships with agency staff and building towards more strategic, long-term or ‘thick’ co-enforcement programs.
- If you’re wondering if there’s money for the community to monitor, no, we have to fight for it. Money is for incentives. States and localities have to put in proposals, we can fight for those standards and funding for enforcement.
- **Final reminder** -- we know this is a lot of information! Through the full GEL series, we plan to help you think about it, bite off a piece. DoT, DoE, CHIPS...our hope through the process (sessions plus office hours) for you to workshop your piece.

OVERVIEW OF BILLS & LABOR PROVISIONS

[Reclaiming US Industry](#) *The American Prospect Jan 2023* A good overview of all the new Infrastructure funding bills, including the opportunity and challenges to effectively implement

[A User Guide to Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) - *Blue Green Alliance*

[A User Guide to Inflation Reduction Act](#) - *Blue Green Alliance*

[Labor Provisions in IJJA, IRA and CHIPS](#) - *CLJE & Wash Center for Equitable Growth*

TRACKING THE MONEY

- [Maps of Progress](#): *White House site that shares information on announced funding (formula and discretionary) as of September 7, 2023 and awarded funding as of July 31, 2023. This is a small subset of what the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will fund and is not intended to be comprehensive. Will be updated monthly.*
- [Biden Investment Tracker](#) - *CAP 20. Searchable database tool to learn more about local projects in your community, and across the country, supported by the Biden administration’s economic laws.*
- [IRA / BIL CHIPS grants tracker](#) *With a free subscription to the Infrastructure Funding Tracker newsletter, users receive a simple, skim-able email each time the federal government opens a new funding opportunity from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act. Updates within 24 – 72 hours after the funding opportunity is announced.*
- [Three additional trackers](#)

The *workplace justice lab@RU* with *JobswithJustice* and the *Always Essential Worker Power Table* convened the **Governance and Enforcement Lab (GEL)** as a space where organizers and advocates can

think together about how to leverage labor policy and enforcement structures at the local and state level to build worker power and organization.