

## What Issues Should Washington Take on in 2021?



Today's [State of American Business Policy Power Hour](#) put the spotlight on what should happen in Washington in 2021. Infrastructure and strengthening America's workforce are top of mind.

### Rebuilding America's Infrastructure

"Congress should go big on funding and investments," advised Yvette Pena-O'Sullivan, Executive Director, LIUNA.

Such an approach can play an important role in economic recovery, said Thomas Smith, Executive Director, American Society of Civil Engineers. "Chronic underinvestment in our infrastructure has serious consequences. The average American will spend \$3300 per year due to infrastructure deficiencies."

What's more, an infrastructure package can help build the resilient low-carbon economy of the future. "We don't have to choose between a good infrastructure policy and making ourselves more resilient. We can do both," said Collin O'Mara, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation.

### Go deeper:

- Today, the Chamber, along with more than 140 national and local organizations, launched the ["Build by the Fourth of July"](#) campaign to urge Congress to enact a fiscally and environmentally responsible infrastructure package by July 4, 2021.

## **Workforce: Education, Reskilling, and Immigration**

Even with millions of Americans out of work, companies have difficulties filling job openings.

One approach to developing our workforce is [Talent Pipeline Management](#), a U.S. Chamber Foundation project, which is being employed in Kentucky. “We work with state government to make sure our talent needs are met. It’s something the business community can take a hold of. It’s employer-led,” said Ashli Watts, President and CEO of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.

Another way to get the workers our economy needs is through legal immigration. “We are dependent on our immigrant workforce,” said Tom Stenzel, President and CEO of the United Fresh Produce Association. “These are families raising their children. They want their children to participate in the American Dream.... It’s time for us to rally around immigration reform.”

Immigrants are also contributing as entrepreneurs. As of 2017, immigrant-owned businesses “employed approximately eight million Americans, and those businesses generated \$1.3 trillion in sales. That’s the bedrock of local economies,” said Ali Noorani, President and CEO of the National Immigration Forum.

**Don’t forget:** We have another [Policy Power Hour tomorrow at noon ET](#). It will be a deep dive into emerging issues at the state and local levels.

[Watch](#)