



# 100 Days: How Biden Has Fared So Far On His Promises

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Before being elected president, Joe Biden promised he could accomplish a lot of things in his first 100 days in office.

We gathered a number of those priorities here, two days after he was declared the winner of the 2020 election.

As we approach the 100-day mark of his presidency, and ahead of his first address to a joint session of Congress on Wednesday, Biden has made a lot of progress on COVID-19, and Americans largely approve of the job he's doing handling the coronavirus pandemic and the economy.

It's a different story, however, when it comes to immigration, which polls show is the president's biggest vulnerability at this point. He has also made efforts on racial justice, the environment and switching back to a more multilateral approach to foreign policy. But so far he has not been able to get everything done that he set out to do.

Here's where Biden stands on much of what he promised (jump down to the details on each topic from the graphic):

## **COVID-19**

### **Assemble a coronavirus task force: DONE**

This was accomplished, and the task force continues with regular briefings, usually three times a week, that do not involve the president. His task force has had a focus on equity in a way that was never done under the Trump administration.

### **Push for immediate coronavirus legislation: DONE**

This is Biden's signature accomplishment so far, as he signed a \$1.9 trillion relief bill that passed along party lines. It contained money for direct payments, enhanced unemployment benefits and rental assistance, but did not include everything Biden wanted, particularly a raise in the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. The wage hike was deemed ineligible under the Senate's rules for using reconciliation, a process that Democrats used as an end run around Republican opposition. The legislation also did not include \$10,000 per person in student loan forgiveness (other options are still being talked about on that front).

### **Release a vaccine distribution plan: DONE**

This was released during the transition. To date, more than 40% of the population has received at least one dose of a vaccine and more than 27% is fully vaccinated. Biden has received high marks in polls for his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, but there are still inequities in who has been able to access the vaccines.

### **Rejoin World Health Organization and keep Dr. Anthony Fauci as a close adviser: DONE**

These steps were taken very early on. Fauci was the one to announce that the U.S. would be remaining in the WHO but noted that the U.S. would work "to strengthen and reform" the organization. The WHO was the subject of intense criticism from the Trump administration for what it saw as failures to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

## **Economy**

### **Reverse Trump's corporate tax cut: NOT YET ACHIEVED**

Biden has not been able to accomplish this yet, but he wants to roll back much of what Trump did by enacting tax increases on corporations to pay for his approximately \$2 trillion infrastructure plan. The upcoming American Families Plan would reportedly be paid for by tax hikes on wealthy individuals.

## **Environment**

### **Organize a "climate world summit": DONE**

Biden held a virtual international climate summit last week, urging countries to follow the United States' lead in reducing their contributions to global warming.

### **Make the U.S. an international leader on climate change: IT'S COMPLICATED**

This is one of Biden's murkier — and more challenging — promises. The rest of the world, Europe in particular, has seen the U.S. drop out of and rejoin multiple international climate agreements and is wary of whether any climate commitments started by Biden would last in the country's current political environment.

Still, the administration has released an aggressive plan to cut emissions over the coming decade, and its infrastructure proposal, if approved, would provide unprecedented boosts to clean energy efforts.

— *Scott Detrow, NPR White House correspondent*

## **Racial equity**

### **Extend the Voting Rights Act: NOT YET ACHIEVED**

A comprehensive voting bill passed the House, but Republicans have universally opposed it, leaving its fate in limbo in the U.S. Senate — and leading to renewed discussions among Democrats about scrapping the legislative filibuster. Republicans argue that the federal government should leave voting rights issues and election administration to the states.

But following the 2020 presidential election and former President Donald Trump's false allegations of widespread fraud, multiple GOP-led states are taking steps to restrict voting rights. Georgia's recently passed law, for example, has been the subject of corporate boycotts and the reason for Major League Baseball moving its All-Star Game out of Atlanta.

### **Institute a national police oversight commission: DROPPED**

This month, the White House announced it was shelving the commission, saying it "would not be the most effective way to deliver on our top priority in this area, which is to sign the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act into law." The bill, which has passed the House but not the Senate, would overhaul certain police practices and ban chokeholds.

The day after the Derek Chauvin guilty verdict for the murder of George Floyd, Attorney General Merrick Garland announced that the Justice Department would be launching an investigation into the Minneapolis Police Department for possible patterns of discrimination and excessive use of force. It's the first investigation of its kind during the Biden presidency.

### **Push Congress to pass the SAFE Justice Act: NOT YET ACHIEVED**

The Safe, Accountable, Fair, and Effective Justice Act (or SAFE Justice Act) was a bipartisan piece of legislation introduced by Democratic Rep. Bobby Scott of Virginia and now-former Republican Rep. Jason Lewis of Minnesota. It would take steps toward changing sentencing and probation, including reducing the use of mandatory-minimum sentencing for nonviolent offenses and instituting policies geared at lowering recidivism.

It was first introduced in 2017 but never received a vote. There has been no action to this point in Congress on the legislation, but congressional aides with knowledge of the legislative push say they are expecting it will be introduced as soon as next month and believe it will have bipartisan and bicameral support. They see it as a complement to the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, which does not deal with sentencing and probation or what happens to people after they serve their time.

## **Immigration**

### **Introduce legislation that would give a pathway to citizenship for immigrants in the U.S. illegally and especially for those brought to the U.S. illegally as children: DONE**

One of Biden's first acts as president was to introduce the legislation. But the prospects for a comprehensive overhaul passing Congress are dim. Democrats on Capitol Hill formally introduced Biden's wide-reaching plan in the House in February, but nothing has come of a potential comprehensive overhaul to this point because of solid Republican opposition. That continues to leave millions in the country illegally and others looking to come in limbo.

### **Make the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program permanent: IT'S COMPLICATED**

Biden signed an executive order on his first day in office that strengthened DACA, but the program remains under threat. A federal judge in Texas, who previously indicated that he thought DACA was unlawful, is expected to rule on the legality of the program soon. But there are also several efforts on Capitol Hill to pass legislation to secure and/or expand DACA-like protections for people who were brought to the U.S. illegally as minors.

### **Stop family separation at the U.S.-Mexico border: IT'S COMPLICATED**

Trump's widely criticized family separation policies were largely stopped during his own administration, and Biden signed an executive order condemning the policy. The current administration is making efforts to reunite families separated under the Trump administration, but in practice, families continue to separate themselves on the Mexican side of the border, where parents send children alone from tent encampments. This has led to an increase of unaccompanied minors coming across the U.S.-Mexico border, and the administration has struggled to deal with the post-Trump surge.

### **Sign an executive order establishing a task force focused on reuniting children and parents separated at the border: DONE**

This was done Feb. 2. The executive order created a task force to help identify children separated from their parents and reunite the families. As of the beginning of April, however, no family members had been reunited.

### **End Trump's executive order banning travelers from some Muslim-majority countries: DONE**

One of the first actions Biden took after assuming office was signing a proclamation ending the ban on travelers from several majority-Muslim countries.

### **Stop the Trump administration's Migrant Protection Protocols as well as the policy of "metering" asylum cases: IT'S COMPLICATED**

On his first day in office, Biden had the Department of Homeland Security suspend new enrollments in a program that has pushed tens of thousands of migrants to wait in Mexico for asylum hearings in U.S. courts. A few weeks later, the administration started to allow asylum-seekers in the program into the United States.

Biden has promised to end "metering," the practice of instituting a daily restriction on how many migrants can seek asylum. But so far the administration has continued to restrict asylum-seekers through two other measures: a ban on "nonessential" travel and a Trump-era finding under "Title 42 of the U.S. Code that anyone 'who would otherwise be introduced into a congregate setting in a land Port of Entry (POE)' posed a public health risk," David Bier of the Cato Institute reported. It's unclear how or if the Biden administration will address or end the efforts in the future.

### **Take away funding for continued construction of a wall along the southern U.S. border: IT'S COMPLICATED**

The wall was another of the first issues Biden promised to address. The president issued a proclamation to this effect on his first day, revoking Trump's emergency declaration that had

helped fund the construction of a border wall. Biden's \$1.5 trillion budget proposal also did not call for funding for the construction of the border wall.

Biden's order included a 60-day review. But his plans now don't appear as concrete. It has been more than a month since that two-month review period, yet the White House says the review is ongoing. The Biden government has even been involved in winning eminent domain cases held over from the Trump administration. And Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas reportedly told employees that some border wall construction might begin again to plug "gaps" left from the construction halted when Biden took office.

It's another example — in addition to waffling on lifting the Trump-imposed refugee cap — of Biden struggling to figure out a clear and cogent approach to immigration.

### **Increase government supervision over U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement as well as Customs and Border Protection, calling for the need to hold personnel "accountable for inhumane treatment": DONE**

While his \$1.5 trillion budget outline did not provide funding for the wall, it did call for an increase of funding for an investigation of immigration agents accused of "white supremacy."

As part of a more "humane" policy, ICE and CBP were told last week to drop the terms "illegal," "alien" and "assimilation." "Illegal" will become "undocumented"; "noncitizen" or "migrant" should be used instead of "alien"; and "assimilation" should be replaced by "integration." In February, the administration issued new guidance for agents to prioritize arrests of immigrants who are national security and public safety threats.

— *NPR's Franco Ordoñez contributed reporting*

## **Foreign policy**

### **Pledge to "pick up the pieces of Donald Trump's broken foreign policy": IT'S COMPLICATED**

Under Trump, views of the U.S. plummeted among the country's strongest allies. Biden has switched U.S. foreign policy back to a more multilateral stance and has shifted power back to diplomacy and the State Department as well. At the Munich Security Conference in February, Biden declared, "America is back." That was met mostly positively by America's allies in Europe, but France and Germany pushed back, notably pointing out that they had to put some distance between themselves and the United States, that the U.S. could not always be relied on and that "interests will not always converge."

Biden also set a date for removing all U.S. troops from Afghanistan: Sept. 11, 2021, which happens to be the 20-year anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. "We went to Afghanistan because of a horrific attack that happened 20 years ago," Biden said this month. "That cannot explain why we should remain there in 2021. We were attacked; we went to war with clear goals. ... We achieved those objectives. Bin Laden is dead and al-Qaida is degraded in Afghanistan, and it's time to end this forever war."

Trump also wanted to get U.S. troops out of Afghanistan, and his administration had negotiated a deal to remove troops by May 1 of this year, something Biden said would be "tough" to achieve. There has been mixed reaction to Biden's decision, particularly because the withdrawal comes without conditions — it's America's longest war, but there are concerns over tracking militants in Afghanistan.

**International summit: NOT YET ACHIEVED**

Beyond 100 days, Biden wants to "host a global Summit for Democracy to renew the spirit and shared purpose of the nations of the Free World." The idea is to gather democratic countries to find ways to combat corruption, authoritarianism and human rights abuses. Biden plans to hold the summit in the coming months, and he has already done an about-face from Trump in calling out corruption and authoritarianism in Russia as well as focusing on human rights abuses in China. That, however, caused a flare-up in tensions last month during the first major talks between the U.S. and China during Biden's presidency.