



## **Infrastructure bill 'contributes to longer-term fiscal problems,' says economist**

Elissa Salamy

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A new report from the Congressional Budget Office is projecting that the current bipartisan infrastructure bill would add \$256 billion to the federal deficit over the next ten years.

“It’s a drop in the bucket compared to pandemic spending, where you were getting trillions of dollars over a short period. But it just simply contributes to our longer-term fiscal problems,” said senior fellow at the Cato Institute Scott Lincicome to The National Desk’s Scott Thuman. “It’s another sign that even for bills that are supposed to be paid for nobody really cares about the debt in Washington, regardless of the potential long-term implications.”

Lead negotiators on the bipartisan infrastructure deal Republican Senator Rob Portman and Democratic Senator Kyrsten Sinema say that the report does not account for the ways the infrastructure bill offsets costs. But Lincicome says that “people’s minds were made up before the CBO score came out.”

“In this environment with how tight it is in the Senate, every vote counts, so you only need one or two to really tip the scale,” said Lincicome.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention extended the eviction moratorium until October for parts of the U.S. with higher substantial COVID transmission, which covers about 90% of U.S. renters. Realtors groups and landlords are now suing the Biden administration, calling the moratorium unlawful. But Lincicome says the moratorium doesn’t just harm landlords.

“It’s going to help some tenants, but it’s going to harm a lot of other tenants, particularly in the long term. They’re going to be on the hook for fees and interest when they pay their back rent, other tenants aren’t going to be able to find places to rent because of limited housing supply and landlords are going to be pickier,” said Lincicome. “In the long term, you’re going to see higher rents and more scrutiny, and a harder time for lower-income Americans to find a place to live.”