



Speak Out Now

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Biden's Budget: Their Democracy is a Sham

The Democrats' \$3.5 trillion spending bill over ten years promised to offer some environmental protection, investments in collapsing infrastructure, free community college for two years, and expanded Medicare coverage, and to raise funds by increasing taxes on corporations and the rich. But as the bill gets close to passing, it has likely already been cut in half with many of these promises removed. Biden and the Democrats, once again, have made promises to working people in order to get elected, only to cave in to the interests of the ruling class of banks, corporations, and the super wealthy once in office.

But even if the original \$3.5 trillion proposal passed with no changes, it would barely make a dent in the climate emergency we are in or in the enormous social crisis facing most working class families. But still, these small improvements that would offer minor relief for some people, are too much for some Democrats.

Democratic Senators Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona have so far been able to block the passage of the budget and make cuts that protect the superrich and various corporate interests.

Manchin, a multi-millionaire and coal company owner who has received more campaign donations from the fossil fuel industry than any other senator, has made it clear whose interests he represents. He opposes funding for renewable energy and any legislation that would restrict the use of fossil fuels — even the minor restrictions Biden has proposed. Manchin has no problem protecting the interests of the fossil fuel industry even as it accelerates climate destruction and threatens all of humanity.

Manchin's daughter, Heather Bresch, was CEO of Mylan Inc., the drug company that jacked up the price of the EpiPen (a life-saving shot of adrenaline) from \$124 dollars in 2009 to \$609 in 2016. During that time, when Bresch made millions, Mylan was one of the largest

donors to Manchin's campaigns. No wonder he opposes restricting drug prices in the budget proposal.

Like Manchin, Senator Sinema of Arizona is another spineless lackey who does the bidding of corporations. Heavily funded by finance and drug companies, she opposes any increases in taxes on corporations or the wealthy, and opposes allowing Medicare to reduce drug prices. Manchin and Sinema have both made their allegiance to the ruling class crystal clear.

What sort of so-called democracy allows two people to block the interests of millions of people? Biden and the Democrats say they want to deliver on their promises to the millions that got them elected, but two little senators have forced them to gut their proposal of the few benefits it had. For Democrats and Republicans alike, the interests of millions of people are not the real priority. It's the banks, the fossil fuel industry, the drug companies, the big corporations — they are the ones really running the show, and the big winners in this game of capitalism.

And while Biden and the Democrats claim that without their small tax increases, they just won't have the funds to increase spending, they have already agreed to spend at least \$753 billion per year on the military. And they have continued the enormous spending of \$120 billion per month by the Federal Reserve since the start of the pandemic. So, there's plenty of money that could be scrounged up to pay for these small budget increases and much more. But they refuse, throw up their hands, and claim they've done all they can do — all because of two senators. What a joke!

In a recent tweet, Senator Bernie Sanders — practically begging Manchin and Sinema to vote for the budget — wrote that if the budget were passed, "it would show working people that democracy works." He's right: this whole budget process is just another reminder that under this system democracy does work — for the ruling class. But it is a total sham for everyone else.