

Sean Casten called his one hundred and seventy four thousand dollar Congressional salary “peanuts” and advocated for a pay increase but still voted to raise your taxes.

Sean Casten compared his \$174,000 annual Congressional salary to “working for peanuts” and supported giving himself a raise:

- In June 2019, Casten Said He Supported Raising The Current Congressional Salary, \$174,000, By \$4,500, And Compared It To “Working For Peanuts.” “Rank-and-file members of Congress currently make \$174,000 annually. [...] Lawmakers are slated to receive a 2.6 percent, or \$4,500, increase in January 2020. [...] Some swing-district Democratic freshmen, including Reps. Dean Phillips (Minn.) and Sean Casten (Ill.), say they’re prepared to defend the pay raise as a way to help attract the best people to Congress. Both pointed to their business backgrounds where annual cost-of-living increases are typical, arguing Congress shouldn’t be any different for members and, consequently, their staff. ‘I want to be able to attract the best and brightest to this job, because that’s how I ran my company. When I ran my company, I paid a competitive wage. I didn’t tell people, come here because you’re so committed to our mission that you’re willing to, you know, sleep on your friend’s couch and work for peanuts. It’s horrible that we force people to do that,’ Casten said.” (Cristina Marcos, “Swing-State Democrats See Trouble In Proposed Pay Hike,” [The Hill](#), 6/6/19)

On November 19, 2021, Sean Casten voted for H.R. 5376, the Build Back Better Act:

- On November 19, 2021, Sean Casten voted for H.R. 5376, the Build Back Better Act. (H.R. 5376, [Roll Call 385](#), Passed 220-213: R 0-212, D 220-1, Casten Voted Yea, 11/19/21)

*Editor’s Note:* The version of the Build Back Better Act referenced is the one that passed the House of Representatives on November 19, 2021, and has not been passed by the Senate or signed into law.

Build Back Better could lead to about \$1 trillion in tax hikes on American workers and businesses, force middle class Americans to shoulder the burden of new corporate taxes, and result in the highest tax rate in the developed world:

- Build Back Better could lead to \$530 billion in tax hikes on American workers and \$470 billion in tax hikes on corporations. “On a conventional basis, the House bill would raise about \$1 trillion in federal revenue from 2022 to 2031. The bill includes about \$1.7 trillion in gross revenue raisers, composed of about \$470 billion in corporate tax increases, \$530 billion in individual tax increases, \$148 billion net from additional IRS tax enforcement, \$340 billion from the drug pricing provisions, and about \$177 billion in net revenue from Ways & Means items scored by the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) and Congressional Budget Office (CBO).” (Alex Durante, Cody Kallen, Huaqun Li, William McBride, Alex Muresianu, Erica York, Garrett Watson, “House Build Back Better Act: Details & Analysis of Tax Provisions in the Budget Reconciliation Bill,” [Tax Foundation](#), 12/2/21)
  - The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget determined that the increase in corporate taxes would result in an indirect tax burden for “some percentage of households in every income group.” “By comparison, only about one-third of those in the top 1 percent of earners and one-fifth of those within the 95<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> income percentiles would face a higher tax burden. While the bill does not directly increase taxes on anyone earning less than \$400,000 per year, some

percentage of households in every income group would end up with higher *indirect* tax burdens because of higher corporate taxes. TPC and other estimators believe corporate tax increases ultimately flow through to retirement accounts, wages, and other sources of income across the income spectrum.” (Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, “Two-Thirds of the ‘One Percent’ Get a Tax Cut Under Build Back Better, Due to SALT Relief,” [Blog](#), 12/10/21)

- **The National Federation of Independent Business determined that the Build Back Better Act would hit small businesses with “significant tax increases, inflexible mandates, and unaffordable penalties.”** “By passing the Build Back Better Act, the U.S. House has proposed saddling small businesses with significant tax increases, inflexible mandates, and unaffordable penalties,’ said Kevin Kuhlman, NFIB Vice President of Federal Government Relations. ‘Small businesses are facing numerous challenges right now, including the inflation tax, supply chain disruptions, worker shortages, and COVID-19 variants and restrictions. These additional burdens will severely hurt small businesses across the country, threaten the small business recovery, and punish Main Street.’” (National Federation of Independent Business, “NFIB: House’s Build Back Better Act Would Harm Small Business Recovery,” [Press Release](#), 11/19/21)
- **Build Back Better would result in the highest income tax rate in the developed world.** “Under the latest iteration of the House Build Back Better Act (BBBA), the average top tax rate on personal income would reach 57.4 percent, giving the U.S. the highest rate in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). All 50 states plus the District of Columbia would have top tax rates on personal income exceeding 50 percent.” (Alex Durante and William McBride, “Top Tax Rate on Personal Income Would Be Highest in OECD under New Build Back Better Framework,” [Tax Foundation](#), 11/1/21)