



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 5, 2022

Manchin's "No" on Build Back Better Means "Maybe"

West Virginia's Democrat Senator Joe Manchin [again declared](#) that, as far as he is concerned, Joe Biden's legacy legislation — his Build Back Better monstrosity — is dead. On Tuesday he told reporters "There is no negotiation going on at this time."

In Washington-ese, "at this time" means the door remains open. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said just before Christmas that he intended to bring the bill to the floor for a vote when Congress reopens despite Manchin's clear statement of opposition to it.

On Fox News the week before Christmas, Manchin appeared with host Bret Baier. After declaring that he "couldn't get there" in support of the pork-laden green new deal, Baier asked: "You're done? This is a no?"

Manchin replied: "This is a no on this legislation."

Manchin is happy to go along with most of the socialist program costing nearly \$2 trillion, including making reparation payments to illegals, expanding the IRS by some 80,000 agents, reducing work requirements for welfare benefits, funding green "investments" to hasten the move to "emission-free" vehicles, and expanding ObamaCare. He could live with the "Green New Deal" projects that would ultimately put many West Virginians working in the fossil-fuel industry out of work.

He just doesn't like the idea that some families would continue to receive a \$300 per month per child welfare benefit without proof of taxable income. Said Manchin, "I've been basically very clear on that: I think there should be a work requirement." And a W-2 tax form would be required for that childcare benefit (which expired in December) to be revived.

Manchin is alone. He is in the driver's seat. With the Senate evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, and every Republican opposed to the gargantuan spending bill, Manchin's "yea" on Biden's legacy bill is critical.

Biden's press secretary said the president's not giving up, despite Manchin's firm "no" in December and his claim of "no negotiations" now. She said, "The president absolutely wants to get Build Back Better done."

Axios reported on Monday that Manchin might be enticed back if the odious childcare credit benefit is removed. Isaac Boltansky, a political analyst with the BTIG brokerage firm, wrote:

From our seat, Senator Manchin's December 19 rejection of the BBB is likely to expedite Democrats' journey through the five stages of grief: from outright denial to acceptance of a smaller package.



AP Images
Joe Manchin



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It will take weeks to craft a viable package that satisfies Senator Manchin without losing [support from] progressives, but we continue to believe that a \$1 trillion package is probable.

Far-left progressive Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.), head of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, isn't letting go, either:

It's unfortunate that [Manchin] ... announced on national television that he was essentially killing the bill because there was a little bit that he hadn't agreed to, but let's go back to the table. Let's get this done. It is too important for us.

The clock is ticking. The midterm elections are closing in on Democrats, who have little to brag about during Biden's first year in office. With Biden's poll numbers dropping out of sight, Democrats' razor-thin control of the House and Senate are in jeopardy.

And, at bottom, Manchin is a politician. He isn't up for reelection until 2024. He has supported the Biden agenda, according to FiveThirtyEight, more than 97 percent of the time. His voting record, according to *The New American's* Freedom Index, is a dismal 28 out of 100, which reflects how little he cares for his oath of office to support and defend the Constitution.

For Democrats familiar with how Washington works, Manchin's "no" means "maybe." Given enough time and pressure, they're hopeful his "maybe" will become a "yes."

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