



SUNRISE
MOVEMENT

United We Dream
ACTION



To: Interested Parties
From: Battle Born Collective, Sunrise Movement, United We Dream Action, Justice Democrats
Re: About last night
Date: October 1, 2021

Last night was a pivotal moment. Progressives showed that they can and will hold the line for President Biden's agenda. They also displayed a level of coordination and discipline that is noteworthy. If observers want to know which way the wind is blowing, in the future, they should listen to progressives. Let's review.

This is a victory for the Biden agenda. Most of Biden's agenda is contained in the reconciliation bill, not the bipartisan infrastructure bill. A week ago, there were serious doubts about whether Biden's agenda would survive. This happened because a rogue faction of weak Democrats led by Congressman Josh Gottheimer and Senator Kyrsten Sinema tried to de-link the bills. The bills were linked for a reason: for Democratic leaders to have the votes to pass both, both needed to be on track to pass. By insisting that the bills become linked once again, progressives held the line for the Biden agenda. The result is that his agenda is back on track.

The lesson: Democrats win when they unify behind popular policies that help people, instead of letting the outliers set the agenda. In 2005, Democrats were in the minority and written off as hopeless. President Bush declared that privatizing Social Security would be his top domestic priority. A small faction of conservative Democrats wanted to play along. Instead of letting them lead Democrats around by the nose, then-Minority Leaders Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid rallied Democrats to oppose Bush's privatization plan. The rest is history: Social Security was saved, and Democrats went on to outperform expectations in the 2006 midterms, winning back both chambers. Today, Democrats' best hope is to unify behind what the people who voted for them want, not cater to the unpopular views of extremist outliers whose priorities resemble those of

corporate lobbyists.

Credibility matters: Progressives called their shot. The events of last night exposed a stark gap in reality: Projecting confidence is not the same thing as counting votes. Long after the whip count became obvious, Congressman Gottheimer tried to project confidence, telling reporters that he would be popping “champagne,” and going on CNN to say that he was “1,000 percent” confident that the bipartisan infrastructure bill would pass. By contrast, CPC Chair Jayapal remained in close contact with the caucus she leads and stated, consistently, that the votes simply weren’t there to move the infrastructure bill if the Build Back Better Act was not moving in tandem. The unity of the CPC as a voting bloc is an important new development, and a credit to members working together and executing on their strategy. The DC press corps has a reflexive tendency to defer to moderates while dismissing progressives. But last night showed which way the wind is blowing. Folks would do well to pay attention.

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