



2022 VIRTUAL LEGISLATIVE
AND POLICY CONFERENCE

America the Beautiful:
Social Infrastructure and the Making of a Nation



America The Beautiful



UNITED STEELWORKERS
**Rapid
Response**
2020 VIRTUAL LEGISLATIVE
AND POLICY CONFERENCE

What Makes America Beautiful?

What are the things that make our communities work well?

What makes us happy as a nation?

Happiness Index

- Measures life satisfaction, the feeling of happiness, and other happiness domains: psychological well-being, health, time balance, community, social support, education, arts, and culture, environment, governance, material well-being, and work.

Figure 2.1: Ranking of happiness 2018-2020 (Part 1)

1. Finland (7.842)
2. Denmark (7.620)
3. Switzerland (7.571)
4. Iceland (7.554)
5. Netherlands (7.464)
6. Norway (7.392)
7. Sweden (7.363)
8. Luxembourg (7.324)*
9. New Zealand (7.277)
10. Austria (7.268)
11. Australia (7.183)
12. Israel (7.157)
13. Germany (7.155)
14. Canada (7.103)
15. Ireland (7.085)
16. Costa Rica (7.069)*
17. United Kingdom (7.064)
18. Czech Republic (6.965)
19. United States (6.951)
20. Belgium (6.834)

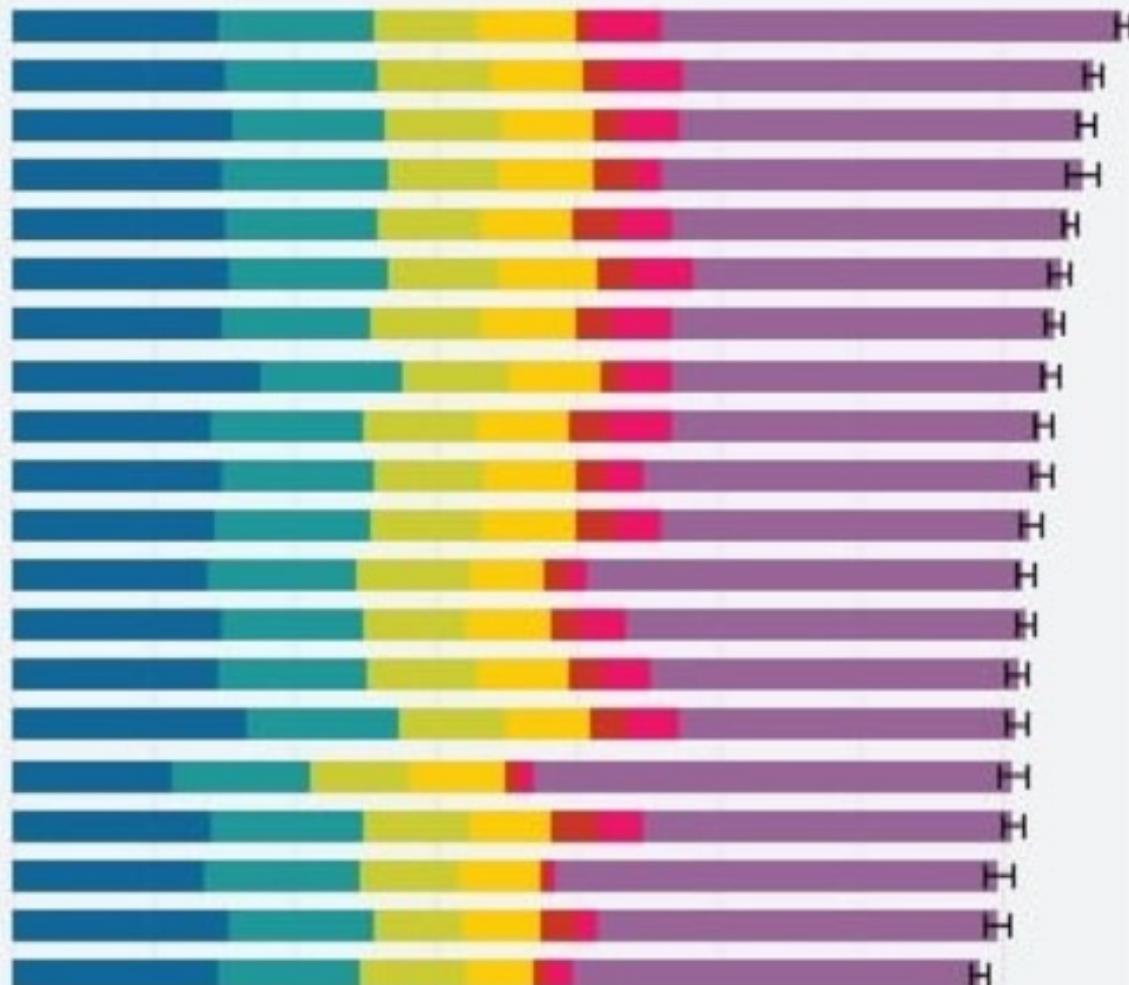


Table 7.1: The factors influencing happiness in Nordic and richest countries

Country	Life evaluation		Log GDP per capita		Social support		Healthy life expectancy		Freedom		Generosity		Corruption	
	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking
Finland	7.77	1	10.61	21	0.96	2	71.80	27	0.95	5	-0.06	91	0.21	4
Denmark	7.60	2	10.75	13	0.95	4	72.10	24	0.95	6	0.10	34	0.18	3
Norway	7.54	3	11.08	6	0.96	3	73.10	13	0.96	3	0.14	23	0.31	8
Iceland	7.49	4	10.72	16	0.98	1	73.00	14	0.94	7	0.27	6	0.69	36
Netherlands	7.49	5	10.79	11	0.93	15	72.20	20	0.92	18	0.21	11	0.39	12
Switzerland	7.48	6	10.96	7	0.94	12	73.80	3	0.93	11	0.12	27	0.31	7
Sweden	7.34	7	10.76	12	0.92	25	72.50	18	0.93	10	0.12	26	0.25	6
Luxembourg	7.09	14	11.46	1	0.92	28	72.60	17	0.89	27	0.01	62	0.36	9
Ireland	7.02	17	11.11	5	0.95	6	72.20	19	0.88	32	0.17	15	0.37	10
United States	6.89	19	10.90	9	0.91	35	68.40	40	0.82	64	0.14	20	0.71	39
United Arab Emirates	6.82	21	11.12	3	0.85	69	66.90	57	0.95	4	0.12	29	—	—
Saudi Arabia	6.37	28	10.81	10	0.87	61	66.00	74	0.81	65	-0.17	127	—	—
Singapore	6.26	34	11.34	2	0.91	34	76.50	1	0.92	19	0.13	24	0.10	1
Kuwait	6.06	49	11.12	4	0.84	71	66.30	71	0.85	47	-0.03	78	—	—
Hong Kong	5.44	75	10.90	8	0.83	75	75.86	2	0.82	57	0.14	21	0.41	14
Nordic average	7.55		10.78		0.95		72.50		0.95		0.12		0.33	
Richest average	6.69		11.05		0.89		71.08		0.88		0.08		0.38	
World average	5.45		9.26		0.81		64.20		0.77		-0.01		0.74	

Source: Calculations based upon data from WHP. 2019

"No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable."

Adam Smith

"All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual."

- Albert Einstein.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence

- What is the role of infrastructure in economic development?
- Infrastructures play a crucial role in the generation of employment opportunities. They **improve mobility, efficiency and productivity of labour**. Moreover, larger investment, development of industry and agriculture create all the more employment opportunities.

Economic infrastructure is a subset of infrastructure that facilitates production and distribution of goods and services. Social infrastructure is a subset of infrastructure that facilitates the quality of life of a community. Example: Energy, transport, communication, etc.

Social Infrastructure

- The **foundational services and structures that support the quality of life of a nation, region, city or neighborhood.** This includes any infrastructure that goes beyond basic economic functions to make a community an appealing place to live.

Soft Infrastructure

- All the services which are required to maintain the economic, health, and cultural and social standards of a population, as opposed to the hard infrastructure which is the physical infrastructure of roads, bridges etc.

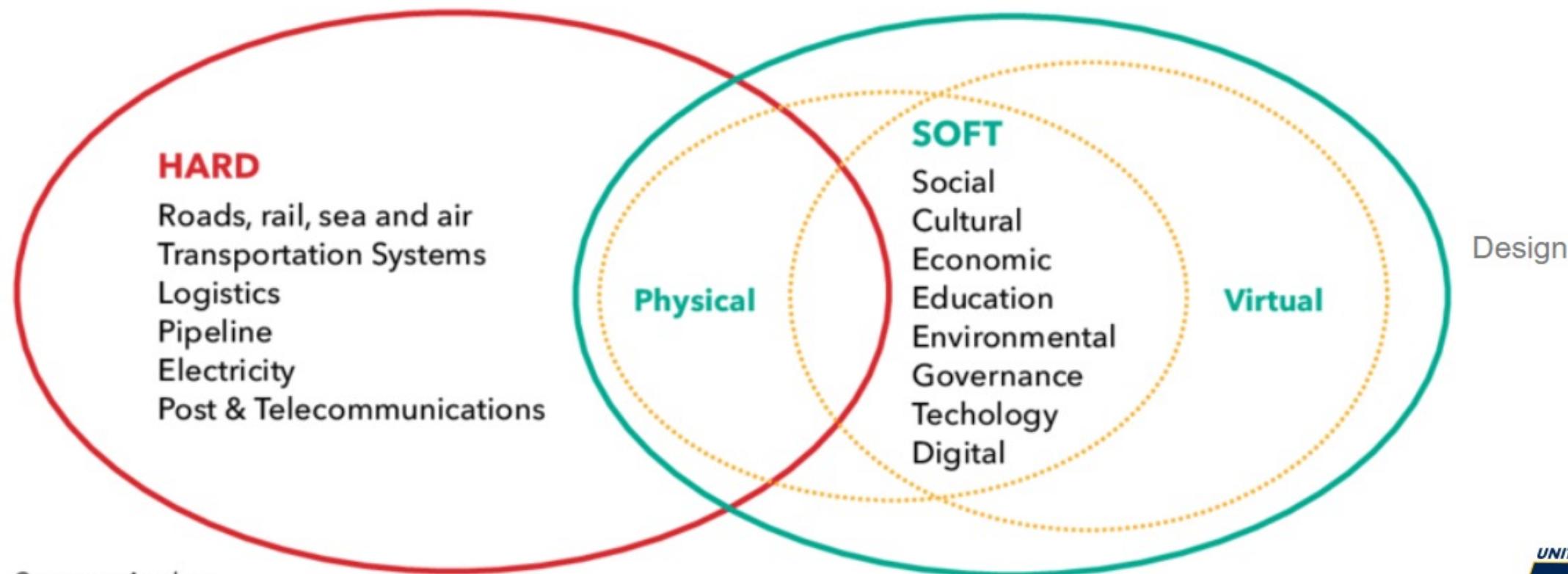
Hard Social Infrastructure

Social infrastructure can be broadly defined as **the construction and maintenance of facilities that support social services**. Types of social infrastructure include healthcare (hospitals), education (schools and universities), public facilities (community housing and prisons) and transportation (railways and roads).



Brian H Roberts

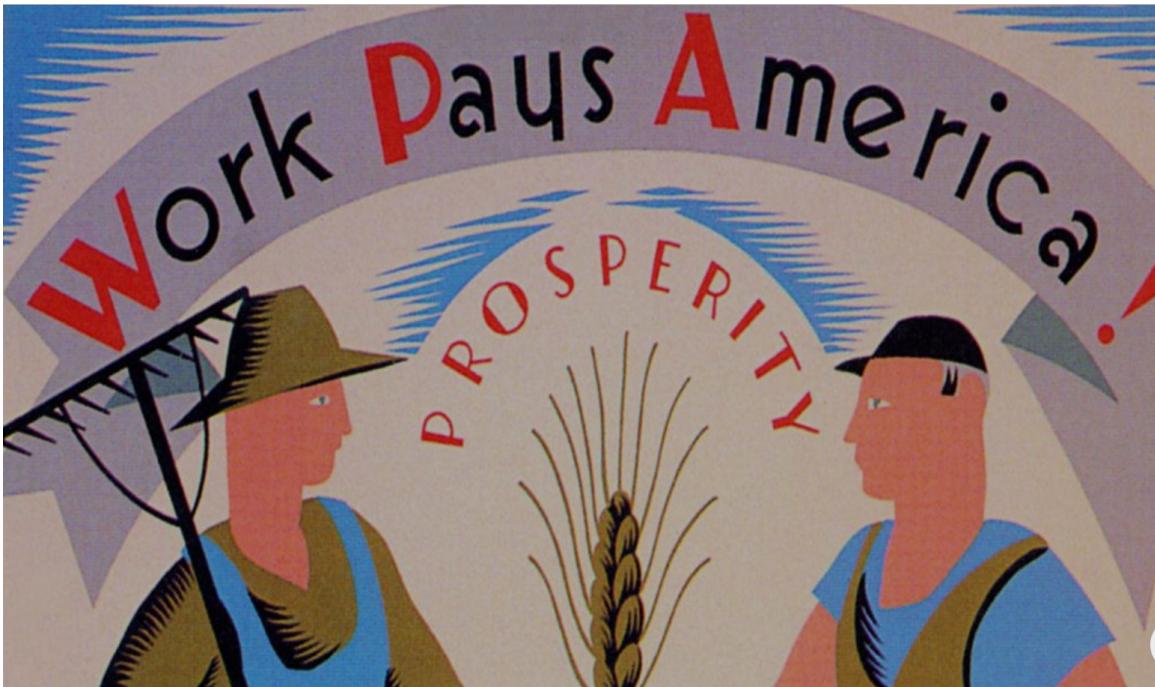
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Source: Author

John Cheong-Holdaway is an economist and public policy professional working on infrastructure, and the delivery of energy and other essential public services, with a particular interest in the interface between the public and private sectors in creating value for society.

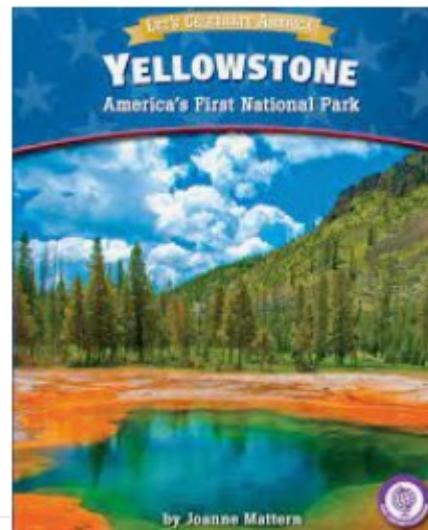
	Economic				Social			
Hard	Roads Airports Railways	Ports Power facilities	Prisons Military bases	Schools Courthouses	Hospitals	Day care facilities	Libraries Public parks	
Soft	Regulators Tariff regimes	Public bus fleets Regulatory frameworks	Militaries	Police forces Laws and regulations		Arts grants		
		Competition policy						



1956

At the urging of the automobile makers and with the support of President Eisenhower, the Interstate Highway System was created through the Federal Highway Aid Act of 1956. The highways would connect the country from east to west and north to south, making consumer, commercial and military travel easier, saving hours of driving time.

The TVA, or Tennessee Valley Authority, was established in 1933 as one of President Roosevelt's Depression-era New Deal programs, providing jobs and electricity to the rural Tennessee River Valley, an area that spans seven states in the South. The TVA was envisioned as a federally-owned electric utility and regional economic development agency. It still exists today as the nation's largest public power provider.



1872, President Grant





Mather School 1639, Boston



Sophonisba Breckinridge



The First Morrill Act (1862): Donating Public Lands for Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.



<https://www.hrsa.gov/get-health-care/conditions/black-lung>



New Amsterdam: 1647



A woman reading a story to three young children at a Child Care Center in New Britain, Connecticut. Photographed by Gordon Parks for Office of War Information, June 1943.



The Social Security Act of 1935

August 14, 1935



Collection of the U.S. House of Representatives
[About this object](#)

Serving 21 terms in the House of Representatives, Robert Doughton of North Carolina chaired three committees: Expenditures in the Department of Agriculture; Ways and Means; and the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation.

On this date, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act of 1935 into law. Passed by the House of Representatives on April 5, 1935, the legislation was reconciled in two sets of conference reports which both houses of Congress agreed to in early August. Despite bitter attacks by fiscal conservatives, the House approved H.R. 7260 by a vote of 372 to 33, a wide margin attributable to Democrats' overwhelming majority in the [74th Congress](#) (1935–1937). The Social Security Act, a landmark initiative of the so-called "Second New Deal," signaled the administration's change in emphasis from emergency economic recovery legislation to social welfare. Upon the bill's passage, Ways and Means Chairman [Robert L. Doughton](#) of North Carolina stated, "I'm proud to say that despite the attacks and partisanship displayed, this measure has not been changed and the vote here today will show that congress is behind our great President and that the country believes in his statesmanship and wisdom."

- Social infrastructure plays an important role in both the economic development of a nation and the development of society's quality of life. Social infrastructure **enhances social wellbeing and furthers economic growth by providing basic services and facilities which allow businesses to develop and flourish.**



“To reweave the web of life, we must cultivate our minds to see and foresee the patterns of the weaving.”

– Joel Glanzberg

Second Bill of Rights...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EZ5bx9Ayl4>

Hard Infrastructure

On November 15, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#), which allocates \$1.2 trillion to fund the rebuilding of roads, bridges, water infrastructure, internet, and more. This includes \$110 billion in roads, bridges, and major projects, as well as \$39 billion in public transit, \$7.5 billion in electric vehicle infrastructure, and \$65 billion towards ensuring every American has access to reliable high-speed internet.

The key provisions of the social infrastructure proposal :

- Support for families:
 - **Universal pre-K:** The bill would provide free pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds. It would expand access to 6 million children a year. Funding would last six years. The provision, along with the child care measure, would cost an estimated \$381.5 billion, according to the CBO.
 - **Child care:** The legislation would limit child care costs for families with children younger than age 6 to no more than 7% of income for those earning up to 250% of state median income, expanding access to about 20 million children. Funding would last six years. The provision, along with the universal pre-K measure, would cost an estimated \$381.5 billion, according to the CBO.
 - **Paid family and sick leave:** Biden also wants to create a federally funded paid family and sick leave program for the millions of Americans who don't already receive the benefit from their employer. He first called for 12 weeks of paid leave, which was then reduced to four weeks during negotiations. The House bill includes four weeks of paid family and sick leave, costing an estimated \$194 billion -- but the provision is likely to be cut out of the legislation once it is taken up by the Senate. Manchin is opposed to including the benefit in this bill, and Democrats can't afford to lose one vote.
 - A program that provides four weeks of paid family and sick leave would cost \$205.5 billion, according to the CBO.
 - Significantly reduce child care costs for working families earning up to \$300,000 a year.
 - \$200 billion to **extend an expanded tax credit for parents** through 2022, and to permanently allow parents to benefit from the child tax credit even if they do not earn enough money to have income tax liability.

- \$165 billion to **reduce health care premiums** for people who are covered through the Affordable Care Act, to provide insurance for an additional four million people through Medicaid and to offer hearing coverage through Medicare.
- \$150 billion to **reduce a waiting list for in-home care** for seniors and disabled Americans, and to improve wages for home health care workers.
- \$150 billion to build **one million affordable housing units**.
- \$100 billion for **immigration streamlining**, in part to reduce a backlog of nine million visas. House Democrats proposed provisions to address the legal immigration system, including a [plan](#) to recapture hundreds of thousands of unused visas various administrations failed to use over several decades and allow green card applicants to pay higher fees to expedite their processing.

- \$40 billion for **worker training and higher education**, including increasing annual Pell grants by \$550.
- \$555 billion to **fight climate change**, largely through tax incentives for low-emission sources of energy.
 - It would offer tax credits to families that install solar rooftops or buy electric vehicles, for example. The investments are aimed at providing incentives to grow domestic supply chains in solar and wind industries.
 - The legislation also calls for creating 300,000 jobs by establishing a Civilian Climate Corps that works to conserve public lands and bolster community resiliency.

- **Affordable housing:** The legislation would funnel \$25 billion into the construction, rehabilitation or purchase of affordable homes for low-income people and for the creation and preservation of affordable rental housing. It would provide \$65 billion to address the capital needs backlog of public housing and would bolster rental assistance to hundreds of thousands of families.
- The measure would also invest in down payment assistance and in community-led redevelopment projects in under-resourced neighborhoods. And it would provide \$24 billion to fund housing vouchers and supportive services.
- The effort would cost about \$148.1 billion, according to the CBO.
- **Pell grants:** The measure would increase the [maximum Pell grant](#) by \$550 for more than 5 million students enrolled in public and private nonprofit colleges and expand access to undocumented students brought to the US as children, who are known as Dreamers.
- It would invest in historically Black colleges and universities and other institutions that serve underrepresented communities. And it would increase funding for workforce development.
- These provisions would cost a total of \$39.8 billion, according to the CBO's estimate.
- **Children's nutrition:** The bill would expand free school meals to nearly 9 million children during the school year and provide the parents of 29 million kids a \$65 per child per month benefit to purchase food [during the summer](#).

How to pay?

- Offsetting that spending is an estimated \$2 trillion in revenue increases, including:
- A 15 percent **minimum tax on the reported profits** of large corporations.
- Efforts to **reduce profit-shifting by multinational companies**, including a separate 15 percent minimum tax on profits earned by U.S. companies abroad — and tax penalties for companies that have their headquarters in global tax havens.
- A 1 percent tax on **corporate stock buybacks**.
- **Increased enforcement** for large corporations and the wealthy at the Internal Revenue Service.
- An additional 5 percent **tax on incomes exceeding \$10 million** a year and another 3 percent tax on incomes above \$25 million.
- Efforts to **limit business losses for the very wealthy** and to impose a 3.8 percent Medicare tax on certain people earning more than \$400,000 a year who did not previously pay that tax.



“The way to think about the pattern which connects is as a dance of interacting parts.”

— Gregory Bateson