

Call me eccentric, but this is my Valentine to a federal statute, the Inflation Reduction Act, better known as the IRA.

No one really expected IRA to pass. A version of the Green New Deal had passed the House. But the Democrats had only a one-vote margin in the Senate, and that one vote was Joe Manchin. Manchin was (and is) the least liberal Democrat in the Senate. On top of that, he represented West Virginia. That's a place where coal is still King and Trump beat Biden by forty points in 2020. Biden didn't come close to carrying even a single county, that's how Red the state is.

The Senate majority lead Chuck Schumer engaged in long, fraught negotiations with Manchin that continued long after it seemed clear that Manchin would never make a deal. And then he did.

And quite a deal it was. The IRA provides at least \$369 billion in funding for clean energy — maybe more, depending on how many people take advantage of its tax credits. As [Time](#) magazine put it, “across the country, the IRA has spurred hundreds of billions of dollars in investment in clean technology.” The Executive Director of the International Energy Agency had this to say: ““I want to make it clear: the Inflation Reduction Act is the single most important climate action since the Paris Agreement in 2015.”

IRA isn't perfect by any means. Manchin insisted on some provisions favoring fossil fuels, including a natural gas pipeline that was one of his pet projects. Some climate advocates don't like provisions supporting carbon sequestration and the use of hydrogen. But there's little question that it will reduce carbon emissions by thousands of megatons.

Alas, you can't send candy or flowers to a federal statute. But IRA, you'll always be close to my heart.