



Dear Climate Action Council,

We represent hundreds of thousands of workers across New York in sectors impacted by climate change. In 2019, our members were on the front lines of securing the passage of the landmark Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). Today, our members continue to be on the front lines of the climate crisis response. They are mitigating health impacts such as chronic asthma, hypertension, and cancer linked to environmental racism and harmful greenhouse gas emissions. They are manufacturing, maintaining, and operating critical renewable energy and electric vehicles for our clean, green future. They are contributing to large-scale energy efficiency improvements in our buildings. They are reducing greenhouse emissions by recycling and composting our waste. They are educating about climate change, sustainability, and resiliency and managing campuses sustainably. They are standing in solidarity.

That's why, three years after the CLCPA was passed, we continue to advocate for ambitious climate action to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect public health, spur economic development, and bring hundreds of thousands of jobs to New York. We thank the members of the Climate Action Council for all of your hard work in putting together this comprehensive Draft Scoping Plan. The Draft Scoping Plan includes critically important recommendations toward decarbonizing our grid and our buildings; prioritizing zero-emission energy sources including wind, solar, geothermal, and storage; and electrifying transportation. We also recognize that there is still more work to be done, work that must lead with our workers and our communities.

Climate action is an opportunity to combat the race to the bottom that has gutted workers' wages, benefits, and rights; to grow our middle class; and to create an equitable, accessible green energy economy while also directly investing in our disadvantaged communities. It is also a moment for New York to step up and lead the nation in paving the way for a just transition that protects the livelihoods and membership of our workers, unions, and communities currently dependent on fossil-fuel industries. To achieve these goals, we urge the Climate Action Council to integrate the following priorities into the Final Scoping Plan.

A Just Transition for Workers and Communities

The Final Scoping Plan must require better protections for existing and new workers alongside better pathways to support jobs growth and workforce development. As such, the Final Scoping Plan should include:

- **A Worker and Community Assurance Fund** established within the New York State budget to provide direct support to workers in fossil fuel-dependent industries as well as communities home to fossil fuel infrastructure. This funding should provide full pension support and wage replacement for displaced workers, tax base replacement for local governments and school districts, and energy transition and economic development

planning grants for communities.

- **Require strong labor standards** on any projects that use State funds or take place on State property, including strengthening existing labor standards under §224-a of the New York Labor Law. Strong labor standards should include: prevailing wage and benefits, project labor agreements, community benefits agreements, local hiring, use of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and, where applicable, labor neutrality agreements.
- **Buy NY and best value procurement provisions** to (a) incentivize job creation through the bidding process along the clean energy, clean transportation, and low-carbon supply chains; and (b) encourage and prioritize high-roads employers to compete up through earning extra credit for good job creation and training commitments. These provisions should be recommended alongside additional policies and programs to incentivize employers to bring high-quality union jobs to New York.
- Concrete strategies to aid workforce development, including **direct funding within the New York State budget as well as additional resources to aid (re)training, workforce development, continuing education, apprenticeship, and pre-apprenticeship programs across sectors**. This should include funding for wage coverage to support worker attendance at existing training courses.

Not only must the Final Scoping Plan protect our workers, it must protect our communities as well. The Final Scoping Plan must be sure to center the health and wellbeing of our disadvantaged and environmental justice communities, where many of our members – as well as those most vulnerable to the climate crisis – work, live, and play. As such, criteria for identifying “disadvantaged communities” must be clearly defined to ensure that funding and infrastructure projects are properly targeted to low and moderate income populations and communities burdened by the legacies of racial and ethnic discrimination that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and climate change.

Funding Climate Solutions

Our climate goals will not be achieved if we do not fund them. Under Chapter 17. Economy-Wide Strategies, the Final Scoping Plan must move forward with an economy-wide polluter fee to generate dedicated, recurring funding to reduce emissions and invest in green energy infrastructure. A polluter fee puts our biggest polluters – corporations – on the hook to pay for the damage they are causing while mitigating impacts to consumers.

Investing in our green energy economy means investing in jobs and public health. By contrast, leaving our climate mandates unfunded threatens to put our workers and our communities further at risk.

Ensuring our Climate Legislation is Enforced

The State has an obligation to treat mandates put forth by the CLCPA and the Climate Action Council as legally enforceable. To support industry compliance and regulatory enforcement, the Final Scoping Plan should include sector-specific timelines for emissions reduction. Without these safeguards in place, we risk our climate legislation becoming meaningless.

New York has the opportunity to set a nationwide precedent in creating a blueprint for climate action that provides a just transition for all. We look forward to seeing the Climate Action Council capitalize on this opportunity in the Final Scoping Plan.

Sincerely,

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