

# Advancing Environmental Justice Through Strong Clean Energy Policy

## Quick Takes



- Public policy is critical for tackling the climate crisis and building an equitable clean energy future in America.
- There is a critical role for environmental justice in these policy discussions, and climate solutions must take into account the disproportionate impacts felt by disadvantaged communities.
- The transition to a clean energy economy must be centered around justice and equity for all Americans and support communities that have historically been left behind by environmental policies.
- The Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act took a number of steps in advancing environmental justice, including expanding access to clean drinking water, tackling legacy pollution, and investing in public transit. We appreciate these important steps, but there is more work to be done.
- Key provisions of the Build Back Better Act can truly accelerate a just transition to a clean economy, providing economic wellbeing for frontline communities, and delivering a healthy and prosperous future.
- We can not afford to miss out on this opportunity. Congress must act to deliver a robust Build Back Better package which includes a strong focus on clean energy growth and environmental justice.

## Key Provisions

### Long Term Extension of the Investment Tax Credit (ITC) With Direct Pay

Disadvantaged communities are disproportionately harmed by the effects of climate change. These same communities are simultaneously the least culpable for the carbon emissions that created the crisis in the first place.

The ITC is a proven tool for driving deployment of clean energy, and reducing carbon emissions from the power sector. A long-term extension of the ITC is a key policy tool to tackle climate change, while creating good-paying union jobs, and investing in underserved communities.

The inclusion of a direct pay provision in the Build Back Better Act will speed deployment of community solar projects, allowing greater participation in the clean energy economy.



Congress must pass the clean energy provisions in the Build Back Better Act to **address environmental justice**, create hundreds of thousands of **jobs for every zip code** in America, and **address the climate crisis**

# Environmental Justice & Clean Energy Policy

## 25D Refundability for the ITC

Currently, only families with a high tax liability can take advantage of the ITC. BBB's inclusion of section 25D refundability makes the credit more equitable and accessible to families across all income levels.

## ITC – Low Income Residential & Indian Land

BBB includes a bonus credit to the ITC for building solar energy projects in low-income communities, low-income residential buildings or Indian Land. This provision will help make clean energy more accessible to historically underserved communities, while driving economic growth.

## ITC Bonus Credit – Energy Communities

BBB includes a bonus credit to the ITC for building solar energy projects in an “energy community.” An energy community is defined as a census tract or adjacent tract where at least 5% of the employment is within the oil and gas sector in the year construction begins, after December 31, 1999 a coal mine has closed, or after December 31, 2009 or a coal-fired electric generating unit has been retired.

This provision will provide for a just transition away from fossil fuels, providing economic opportunity for communities that have traditionally relied on a fossil based economy.

## Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grants

BBB includes Environmental and Climate Justice Block grants to reduce pollution and climate threats in communities on the front lines of the climate crisis. These grants will address legacy environmental and health hazards, by supporting community-led priorities to reduce pollution and improve public health and climate-readiness.

## Civilian Climate Corps

The climate crisis threatens the lives and livelihoods of Americans across the country. The Build Back Better Act funds a Civilian Climate Corps to train a new workforce to access clean energy and community resilience jobs. This program will create the equivalent of 300,000 new full-time positions with fair pay and good benefits in jobs and service opportunities that will help protect our communities.

## Workforce Development

Workforce development programs are critical to help American workers secure good-paying jobs and provide employers the talent they need to succeed and grow. This includes important investments in strengthening workforce programs to combat climate change and pivot the country towards clean energy sources, through expanding clean energy apprenticeship programs.



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