

To President Biden and Vice President Harris,

We are honored to congratulate you on your victory this November and look forward to working with your Administration over the next four years.

Coal powered our nation's rise as an industrial and economic power. Yet miners, coal-plant workers, and coal communities face urgent health, economic, and environmental problems. Many feel discarded and ignored.

As non-partisan organizations working to build equitable and sustainable economies in places affected most by the changing coal economy, we were excited to see many of the ideas in our [National Economic Transition platform](#) reflected in your own climate platform. As your platform indicates, the ongoing transition from fossil fuels to a clean energy economy brings with it incredible opportunities and significant responsibilities. The critical action underway to tackle the climate crisis must also ensure that the communities that produced the fuels that powered America for generations—the places where we live and work, from Navajo Nation to the Powder River Basin to Appalachia and beyond—are not left behind. To ensure durable support for climate action and to safeguard the livelihoods and well-being of millions of people in coal communities, our nation needs to get this transition right.

The fossil fuel sector is currently in turmoil, and the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the decline of the coal sector and the closure of coal plants and mines, leaving communities little time to prepare for transition. The economic uncertainty facing Main Street is destabilizing local economies and governments when services and support are needed most. In many communities, this decline is hitting historically marginalized groups the hardest, including low-income people, Native/Indigenous people, Black people, and people of color.

These workers and communities must be a central part of the new, clean economy. The good news is that there is work underway to achieve just that. Leaders from these communities crafted the National Economic Transition platform to provide national policymakers with proven, community-driven solutions that can be scaled up across the country. Workers in Wayne, West Virginia are learning to install solar panels; Navajo communities and entrepreneurs near the recently closed coal-fired Navajo Generating Station in Northern Arizona are launching clean energy and sustainable tourism enterprises and partnerships; and community members from Southwest Virginia to western Colorado are creating regional food markets, which in turn are supporting local, sustainable farmers. Now, it is time to put these solutions to work on a far greater scale.

We encourage you to fulfill and build on your [campaign promise](#) to create a task force on coal and power plant communities, as well as the Biden-Sanders Unity Task Force's [recommendations](#) to empower communities and workers impacted by the changing energy market. **We also recommend the immediate creation of a White House Office of Economic Transition, accompanied by increased funding for transition programs in the short term and a more robust entity to build community capacity in the long term.**

In the attached two-page document, we include more details on how this office can be structured. This Office of Economic Transition will help drive bottom up solutions from day one, ensuring that post-coal economies across this nation meet people's needs, strengthen communities, and help slow or reverse climate change. We know that your administration shares these goals.

On behalf of our organizations and impacted communities across the nation, we are grateful for the opportunity to share these ideas and eager to discuss how you and your team can seize the opportunity to build a better, healthier, and more resilient future for the American coal communities who helped power our country for generations. They supported our country when we needed it most, and now they deserve our support when they need it most. Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Just Transition Fund  
Appalachian Citizens' Law Center  
Appalachian Voices  
Center for Coalfield Justice  
Coalfield Development  
Colorado AFL-CIO  
Generation West Virginia  
Mountain Association  
Sequestering Carbon, Accelerating Local Economies  
Tó Nizhóní Ání  
Tribe Awaken  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Western Organization of Resource Councils