

April 18, 2022

President Joseph Biden
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

President Biden, Leader Schumer, and Speaker Pelosi:

We, the undersigned members of the Appalachian community and allies, write to emphasize to you the importance of passing a bold reconciliation package that addresses the climate crisis in a way that supports good-paying, sustainable jobs in the communities that have powered this nation for more than a century.

The decline of the coal industry in Appalachia has left many communities in the region grappling with unemployment, low income levels, black lung disease and environmental degradation. When President Biden took office, he made a commitment to prioritize coal mining and power plant communities in the clean energy transition. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was a significant step toward fulfilling that promise. But the investments included in the \$555 billion clean energy and climate reconciliation proposal remain critical to a successful economic future for Appalachian communities.

On March 1st, U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin once again indicated his support for the climate provisions included in the House-passed reconciliation bill, meaning the entire Democratic caucus is in support of the \$555 billion in clean energy investments. As the leaders of Congress and our country, we urge you to prioritize getting this deal done in order to create thousands of sustainable jobs in energy transition communities in Appalachia and thousands more across the country.

The transition to a clean energy economy must be centered around justice and equity for all Americans and support communities that have historically been hit hardest by the fossil fuel industry and its decline. Specifically, we ask that you support provisions that:

- Provide robust funding for clean energy projects, including increasing access to rooftop solar and weatherization assistance for low- and moderate-income families, as well as bonus credits to encourage solar projects in low-income and tribal communities. Tax provisions that encourage the growth of the solar industry, including access to the Investment Tax Credit for non-taxable entities and a 10-year extension of the 30% Solar and Storage Investment Tax Credit are essential.

- Support clean energy manufacturing job creation in disadvantaged communities, including the Advanced Solar Manufacturing Production Tax Credit. Encourage cleaner and more efficient manufacturing, including through the redevelopment of shuttered coal plants and manufacturing sites.
- Reinstate the Black Lung Excise Tax to its historic rate of \$1.10 and \$0.55 per ton of underground and surface mine coal, respectively, and extend this rate for 10 years in order to ensure that benefits and black-lung-related medical care are funded for miners and their families.
- Invest in dislocated energy worker support, replacement of lost state/local revenue, and additional funding for programs that spur economic development and diversification in these regions.
- Provide pathways into union employment for women, Black workers and other workers of color, particularly people who have served correctional sentences or recovered from addiction.
- Fund grants and loans for rural electric cooperatives to help them develop affordable, job-creating and accessible renewable energy and energy efficiency projects and programs.
- Create a new Civilian Conservation Corps – a diverse new workforce that can conserve our public lands, bolster community resilience, and address the changing climate, all while putting good-paying union jobs within reach for more Americans.

We cannot afford to miss this opportunity. Please act immediately to move forward on a legislative package that includes the \$555 billion clean energy jobs and climate plan that will help transform coal-impacted Appalachia.

Sincerely,

Appalachian Regional Groups

Appalachian Voices

Appalshop

AppLit: Resources for Readers and Teachers of Appalachian Literature for Children and Young Adults

Christians For The Mountains

Breathe Project

Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Christians For The Mountains

Community Housing Partners

Defenders of Wildlife

Heartwood

Livelihoods Knowledge Exchange Network, Inc. (LiKEN)

Partner Community Capital, Inc.

Radford University Appalachian Regional & Rural Studies Center

ReImagine Appalachia

The Alliance for Appalachia

National Partners

Citizens Coal Council
Climate Institute
Energy Efficiency Alliance of New Jersey
National Wildlife Federation
Pipeline Safety Coalition
Sierra Club
Tó Nizhóní Ání

Kentucky Groups

Kentuckians For The Commonwealth
Kentucky Conservation Committee
Kentucky Resources Council
Mountain Association

Ohio Groups

FreshWater Accountability Project
Green Sanctuary Committee First Unitarian Universalist Society of Marietta, OH
KO Consulting, LLC
Moms Clean Air Force in Ohio

Pennsylvania Groups

Beaver County (PA) Marcellus Awareness Community
Center for Coalfield Justice
Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation
Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance
Keystone Progress
Keystone Progress Education Fund
Keystone Research Center
Moms Clean Air Force, Pennsylvania Chapter
PennFuture
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Protect Franklin Park
RER Energy Group
Solar United Neighbors of Pennsylvania

Tennessee Groups

Interfaith Worker Justice of East Tennessee
Jobs with Justice of East Tennessee
Mountain Women's Exchange
Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (SOCM)
Woodland Community Land Trust

Woodland Community Development Corporation

Virginia Groups

Appalachian Sustainable Development
Delegate Sam Rasoul
Climate Action Alliance of the Valley
KII Industries
Preserving Grayson, Inc.
Roanoke Group, Sierra Club
Secure Futures, LLC
Shenandoah Faith and Climate
Solar United Neighbors of Virginia
Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards
Bethel J. Brock, President, Southwest Virginia Black Lung Association Chapter 2
The Southwest Virginia New Economy Network
The Clinch Coalition
Virginia Organizing

West Virginia Groups

Coal River Mountain Watch
Gesundheit institute
Mid-Ohio Valley Climate Action
Arvin Hanshaw, President, Nicholas County WV Black Lung Association
Moms Clean Air Force West Virginia Chapter
On The Levels Farmstead
Revolt Energy
Rise Up WV
Solar United Neighbors of West Virginia
West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy
West Virginia Chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby
West Virginia Council of Churches
West Virginia Environmental Council
West Virginia Interfaith Power and Light
West Virginia Rivers Coalition

Contact: Chelsea Barnes, Chelsea@appvoices.org, (614) 205-6424