

*****News Release*****

**For Immediate Release:
Thursday, September 23, 2021**

**CLIMATE WEEK
SUNSET PARK, BROOKLYN CLIMATE JUSTICE DAY OF ACTION**

***UPROSE, Community and Elected Leaders, Climate Justice Allies,
March and Rally to Demand
Immediate, Bold Action for Climate Justice in Sunset Park and Beyond***

Climate and COVID Crises Continue to Hit Frontline Communities First and Worst

Brooklyn, NY -- In the wake of Hurricane Ida and ongoing environmental injustices, UPROSE and frontline community leaders of Sunset Park, joined by prominent elected officials, local and national climate justice activists, advocates for workers rights and green jobs today marched and rallied to demand community-led solutions to build for climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience in Sunset Park and beyond.

Like other frontline, environmental justice communities, Sunset Park, Brooklyn has been faced with storms, flooding, air pollution, extreme heat, and power outages this summer alone due to climate change's intensifying impacts, which hit these communities first and worst.

Marchers and rally participants demanded immediate and bold action to operationalize a community-led plan for a Green Resilient Industrial District (GRID) to make the Sunset Park industrial waterfront, NYC's largest, a hub for renewable energy, food security, sustainable manufacturing, and clean transportation jobs and economic development.

"The time to act is now. Climate legislation must turn away from propping up outdated and unproven techno-fixes and instead center and be accountable to those who have been hit first and worst for decades. These are the largely BIPOC communities who continue to face the brunt of the storms, quite literally, and whose innovative solutions are rarely resourced and brought to scale. Comprehensive and bold initiatives such as community controlled renewables like we have here in Sunset Park must be scaled up. It's time to follow the frontlines- we have the solutions." -**Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director of UPROSE & Co-Chair Climate Justice Alliance**

"Climate justice, racial justice and economic justice are inextricably intertwined. We have already shown, here in Sunset Park, that green infrastructure is both the environmentally responsible and economically responsible path forward, and that community driven growth is something we can expand upon here and throughout the city. We have seen tragic reminders



of our failure to confront the climate crisis with the resources or innovation required, and we need to act now to help prevent future loss and create future gain." - **Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate**

"The City's largest remaining industrial waterfront, Sunset Park, should be retooled for a green economy to address climate change head-on. There is no better place to lead a green re-industrialization than in diverse, working class communities of color which have borne the brunt of climate change from storms, heat waves, power outages and air pollution. We don't need more e-commerce last-mile trucking facilities and land-based waste transfer stations. We demand resources to create new jobs and develop skills necessary in a cleaner economy. UPROSE's proposed Green Resilient Industrial District (GRID) for green port, clean energy and green manufacturing, should be funded through Federal agencies from the Department of Energy to Labor. This should be part of the President's "Justice40 initiative" which sets a goal for communities most impacted by climate change and pollution to receive at least 40 percent of overall benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy. We can build back better, together." - **Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY)**

"Considering carbon pollution's terrible toll, including superstorms that grow more frequent and severe every year, like Sandy and now Ida; extreme heat and unhealthy air that, due to historic injustices, particularly plague low-income neighborhoods and communities of color; and the opportunities for making frontline communities hubs for climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience -- we simply cannot afford further delay in making frontline communities like Sunset Park the core of a Just Transition to a new, more equitable clean energy economy," said **Eddie Bautista, Executive Director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance.**

"On this Day we must take action and call for a Sustainable and Just transition in which we all can have Good Green jobs. Climate Justice is Racial Justice and Racial Justice is Climate Justice." - **Reverend Yearwood, Hip Hop Caucus**

"Climate change is a public health crisis. It is killing our children and our families. We have seen this with the tragic outcomes of Hurricane Ida, which left 42 people dead between New York and New Jersey earlier this month. At the same time, floodwaters are affecting the long-term health of our most vulnerable populations, spreading vector-borne diseases in our food and water, causing indoor mold, and leading to respiratory disease and other health risks. This is all exacerbated by housing instability and poor living conditions. It is threatening our physical and mental health, as seen by the anxiety and post-traumatic stress that Hurricane Katrina that still affects us to this day. Climate change threatens our very existence; we can no longer sit back with our hands tied. It is life or death." - **Mon Yuck Yu, Executive Vice President Academy of Medical & Public Health Services**

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"In the aftermath of catastrophic weather events caused by Hurricane Ida, we have seen loved ones lost and unprecedented damage done to our vulnerable working-class communities in the front lines. We need to be intentional in our collective fight to address environmental injustices and climate change, not settle for piecemeal solutions that will only put our communities in harm's way. This intention begins by meaningfully engaging our most-impacted communities by increasing participation, accountability, and ownership in every step of the decision-making process, investing entirely in a resilient and just transition to renewables, and ensuring that every project is responsible to the community's needs - this includes projects that will lead to greater use of our working waterfront such as, but not limited to, e-commerce facilities, and commercial & demolition (C&D) waste sites."-**Marcela Mitaynes, NY Assembly**

"The time to confront climate change is now and it starts right in Sunset Park, Red Hook, and throughout our neighborhoods in New York City," said **Councilmember Carlos Menchaca**. "Superstorms due to climate change are no longer a theoretical possibility: they are here, more frequent, and more deadly, just as we saw with Hurricane Sandy and Ida. That is why I am proud to join UPROSE and community groups in the Climate Justice March to demand a just transition to a green and sustainable infrastructure that will protect our communities from climate change and create the green and well-paid jobs of the future."

"The People's Climate Movement - New York joins UPROSE in calling for a just transition to renewable energy. We support today's Climate Justice Day of Action, marching in solidarity with frontline community organizations such as UPROSE, which are leading the way to finding workable solutions to the rapidly escalating, deadly climate crisis." -**Marilyn Vasta, PCM-NY**

"The climate is changing. Storms are stronger and more damaging, summers are hotter and winters are wetter and snowier. Instead of adding more pollution-generating infrastructure to our already burdened communities, we must commit ourselves to climate justice and a green future. I'm proud to stand with UPROSE and the communities I represent in our fight for true environmental justice."- **Zellnor Myrie, NY Senate**

"Communities like ours have faced floods, extreme heat and pollution — from the BQE, peaker plants and truck exhaust. For decades, UPROSE has been fighting for climate justice, and I'm proud to stand with them. Climate and environmental justice are working people's fights, these are the fights of people of color, these are the fights of our community, for our lives. Frontline communities like ours have the knowledge and experience to know what kind of solutions we need — and the scale of the solutions we need. We can't just nibble around the edges and hope for a better climate. We know we need to confront capitalism in order to build a liveable future."-**Alexa Aviles, Councilmember Elect**

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“The climate crisis is getting worse and with the economic impacts of COVID, our frontline communities are facing catastrophic outcomes. We have seen again and again that private developer-led proposals won’t bring real sustainability; we need community-led solutions for climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience now. “ - **Margaret Kwateng, National Green New Deal Organizer, Grassroots Global Justice**

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