

April 20, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader McConnell:

For too long, the benefits of a clean energy economy have eluded communities of color, indigenous communities, low-income, rural, and frontline communities disproportionately impacted by climate and environmental change. Achieving real clean energy equity requires that we address historic policy inequities, prioritize critical investments in the hardest-hit areas, and create opportunities for economic growth that foster justice.

Additionally, hundreds of gigawatts of local solar power will be needed in the coming decade to meet the Biden-Harris Administration's climate and equity goals of 100% clean electricity by 2035 and ensuring at least 40% of new clean energy benefits go to traditionally underserved communities. However, our aging electric grid cannot currently accommodate the volume of new clean, renewable, local resources required to meet climate goals and relieve energy poverty. We must rebuild our electricity infrastructure to meet both grid and social goals together.

To address these challenges a diverse coalition of advocates representing civil rights, indigenous, environment, equity, rural, and business organizations is uniting to ensure the equitable and just deployment of renewable energy policy that strengthens community resilience and unlocks the benefits of a just and sustainable clean energy economy for all through local solar power.

The coalition is proposing a comprehensive set of federal policy actions that bridge the equity gap in clean energy access and modernize our electric grid. In alignment with the American Jobs Plan and the Biden-Harris Administration's climate and equity goals, the attached targeted policy recommendations ensure that at least 40% of the benefits (it actually targets 50%) reach underserved communities including communities of color, low-income households, indigenous communities, and those communities disproportionately impacted by climate and environmental degradation. The three pillars of the policy recommendations are as follows:

1. Empower 30 million households to go solar, including 15 million with low to moderate incomes;

2. Create an energy economy and workforce that includes everyone — especially those in underserved communities — spurring hundreds of billions of dollars in private investment in public infrastructure and creating over one million new jobs, while supporting business ownership, entrepreneurship and economic opportunity for communities of color and underserved communities;
3. Build a more resilient grid that is ready to meet our economic, workforce, and climate goals including achieving 100% clean renewable energy by 2035.

The roadmap also identifies critical recommendations for local planning and infrastructure investment such as passing the Affordable Solar Energy for Our Communities Act (Rep. Cárdenas), expanding access to the solar Investment Tax Credit, and modernizing the electric grid for an equitable and resilient clean energy future. The roadmap is inclusive of tribes and territories, seeks to ensure we meet and exceed the Administration's goals to decarbonize the electric grid, and targets the energy benefits toward underserved communities including communities of color, low-income households, indigenous communities, and those communities disproportionately impacted by climate and environmental degradation.

We urge you to review and take action on the set of policy recommendations outlined in the attached roadmap. We also look forward to meeting with your office to discuss how Congress can help build a more equitable, resilient, and clean electricity grid that works for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Solar Access for All Coalition

Coalition partners for the *Roadmap to Expand Solar Access for All*:

Earthjustice, Coalition for Community Solar Access, GreenLatinos, Solar United Neighbors, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, GRID Alternatives, NAACP, Appalachian Voices, League of United Latin American Citizens, Local Solar for All, Hispanic Federation, Vote Solar, Chispa LCV, TUEILIP