



TEXAS CLIMATE JOBS PROJECT

Combating Climate Change, Reversing Inequality: A CLIMATE JOBS PROGRAM FOR TEXAS

Texas is currently confronted by three major, intersecting crises: the Covid-19 pandemic and ensuing economic crisis; a growing crisis of inequality of income, wealth, race and power; and the worsening climate crisis that continues to take its toll on Texans through hurricanes, major flood events, wildfires, debilitating heat waves and the significant economic cost of these extreme weather events. A well-designed recovery from the Covid-19 global health pandemic, however, can simultaneously tackle these intersecting crises. Some of the recommendations in “Combating Climate Change, Reversing Inequality: A Climate Jobs Program for Texas” include:

ENERGY

- **Install 20 GW of Solar Energy by 2030 and 40 GW by 2040.** The deployment of 40 GW solar energy generation will reduce carbon emissions in Texas by 41 million metric tons per year and will produce significant job creation, including 35,412 direct jobs over 20 years during the development of the solar projects.
- **Install 70GW of Wind Energy by 2030 and 100 GW by 2040.** Increasing capacity to 100 GW of wind energy would significantly reduce Texas’s carbon dioxide emissions, avoiding approximately 113 million metric tons of CO₂ annually, the equivalent of taking 24 million cars off the road. Increasing the state’s windy energy capacity to 100 GW would create approximately 455,000 direct jobs over 25 years. This expansion of renewable wind energy would cost approximately \$96 billion over 25 years.
- **Upgrade Transmission for Renewable Energy.** An investment to prepare for 70 GW of renewable energy by 2035 would cost \$42 billion and create 44,300 direct jobs over the course of 15 years.

INDUSTRY

- **Utilize 45Q Tax Credit to Deploy Direct Air Capture and Storage Projects.** The State of Texas as well as individual cities and counties in Texas can help advance the development and deployment of carbon capture and storage projects for industrial purposes through expedited planning, permitting and funding, including through utilization of the 45Q tax credit.

TRANSPORTATION

- **Electrify State and Local Vehicle Fleets by 2040.** Texas has 30,296 vehicles in its state and local vehicle fleet that travel about 358 million miles per year, consuming almost 21 million gallons of fuel. Fueling and maintaining this fleet costs the state \$106 million a year. If Texas converts the non-emergency, light-duty segment of its fleet (about 17,598 vehicles) to 100% electric by 2030, the state will save taxpayers \$314 million and save and reduce yearly CO₂ emissions by 91,262 metric tons in 2030. If it electrifies the entire fleet, it will reduce carbon emissions by 157,000 metric tons per year. To support the conversion to electric vehicles, Texas will need to install approximately 8,799 charging stations, which can create 1,307 jobs in construction and electrical line upgrades and new installations. In-state manufacturing of these EVs can create 3,401 direct, indirect and induced jobs.
- **Build a High-Speed Rail Network between Texas’ Five Largest Cities.** High-speed rail produces 1/12 the CO₂ emissions per seat as an airline flight. A HSR network will save 639,000 CO₂ emissions per year in Texas. 73 Planning is already underway for Texas’s \$15 billion, 205 mph bullet train from Houston to Dallas, reducing the travel time between these two cities to 90 minutes. Building a HSR

network between the five largest cities in Texas can create 115,00 direct construction jobs and hundreds of permanent operations and maintenance jobs.

CARBON-FREE SCHOOLS

- ***Retrofit and Install Solar on Public Schools by 2035.*** Retrofitting all 8,900 public schools in Texas would save schools in Texas 171 million KWh of electricity annually and save 6 million metric tons of CO₂. A 100KW solar system generating energy on all public schools will reduce CO₂ emissions in Texas by 673,000 metric tons per year. Retrofitting all public schools in Texas will cost \$13.3 billion and create 84,000 direct jobs. Installing a solar system on every K-12 public school in Texas will cost \$1.6 billion and create 9,000 direct jobs.

BUILDINGS

- ***Reduce Energy Use in Existing Buildings by 30% by 2035 and by 40% by 2045 and Mandate Net-Zero Emissions for New Construction by 2050.*** Reducing energy use by 40% would result in the elimination of 11 million metric tons of CO₂ annually. The potential for job creation in energy efficiency is tremendous given the building square footage in the state. Retrofitting the public universities, for example, would cover 39 million square feet, cost \$818 million, and create 5,400 jobs.

BROADBAND

- ***Expand broadband coverage to ensure universal coverage for all Texas residents by 2035.*** Texas should embrace universal broadband as a key part of undertaking an equitable transition to a clean energy economy. Renewable energy systems, building monitoring, precision agriculture and conservation, healthcare systems, and transportation infrastructure all rely on stable internet connections. In addition, lack of broadband service also exposes the stark inequalities that exist in Texas, as Black and Latino residents have less access to broadband than white residents. Providing broadband access to all Texans would cost \$8.3 billion and create 12,444 direct jobs across the state.

LABOR

- ***Ensure High-Quality and Union Jobs in Texas. To create good jobs in these sectors, Texas should:***
 - Adopt Davis-Bacon Requirements: Federal funds will flow to U.S. states under the Biden Administration, Texas needs to be ready as possible to accept those dollars and meet federal expectations.
 - Attach even more stringent labor standards to federal programs and funds which will help TX implement better labor standards.

- Adopt strict apprenticeship training requirements and Community Workforce Agreements: Unions and management have the best certified training programs. These requirements give unions an advantage.
- Make sure both federal and state prevailing wage laws are complied with whenever public funds are used and explore potential to set higher local and country-level prevailing wage.
- Develop and implement unique industry standards that labor-management partnerships can quickly and easily meet – for example, there’s currently no certification for electric vehicle charging station installation and maintenance – unions could develop and provide this, Houston has mandated that trained operators have to run 70% of non-residential buildings by 2030.

JUST TRANSITION

- ***Create a multi-stakeholder Just Transition Commission and Evaluate Previous Plant Closures.*** To provide support for workers and communities as fossil fuel activities decline, a multi-stakeholder Just Transition Commission should be established to understand the scope of transition, supports needed, and potential new industries. These efforts must have meaningful labor, environmental justice, and community representation.