



## Summary of The *Climate Jobs* Agenda for The Biden Administration

*Climate Jobs* is an emerging movement of local unions who have formed coalitions in many states to develop a *Climate Jobs* agenda. Our “coalitions of the willing” are partnerships between local unions committed to elevating the importance of climate action and lobbying state and city governments to implement bold Climate Jobs initiatives. While Climate Jobs is a union-lead movement supported by the Climate Jobs National Resource Center, it works closely with Environmental Justice (EJ) advocates, front line communities, and environmental groups on legislation and policy that serves our common interests.

This memo summarizes ten initiatives Climate Jobs has proposed to the Biden Administration for implementation in the next 18 to 24 months that will deliver tangible results quickly and that can be taken by the Executive Branch, with little or no support from the U.S. Senate.

The Climate Jobs Agenda: Ten Initiatives for the Next Two Years (2021-2022)

### ***1. Foster More Cooperative Relationships Between the States and Federal Government and Progressive Labor Standards as The First Principles of the Climate Jobs Action Plan***

A more cooperative relationship between the States and Federal Government and a strong commitment to progressive labor standards are the foundations of our Climate Jobs Agenda, the axioms that underlie all our specific proposals.

### ***2. Commit the U.S. to building the world’s biggest offshore wind industry to create good jobs and renewable energy for states and cities along the East and West coasts.***

We recommend the Administration use the Department of Energy and the Department of Interior to develop Offshore Wind (OSW) farms that will expand the supply of renewable electricity and position the US as the global leader in OSW. It has been estimated that 100 GW of new offshore wind capacity can be installed, primarily on the East Coast, but also on the West Coast too.

The premise of the Climate Jobs Movement is that the problems of climate change and economic inequality are linked and need to be addressed simultaneously. Lasting climate solutions will require major new investments. If these investments are made with the right labor standards, they have the potential to create millions of good jobs that in turn can reduce income inequality and generate political support necessary to ensure the success of a long-term climate action program.

### **3. Create 100,000 Carbon Free Schools (CFS) By 2024 Through Solar, Energy Efficiency, and Energy Conservation**

CFS would be a federal – state – local partnership built around 3 actions: mandatory energy audits funded by the federal government, followed by energy efficiency projects and solar power retrofits developed and funded by state and local governments. The federal agencies would set minimum standards, including labor standards, and provide guarantees of locally issued bonds to finance the projects. The bonds would be repaid from the energy savings.

### **4. Electrify the Interstate Highway System to Support the EV Transition**

The electrification of the Interstate Highway System is a cornerstone of the growth of the EV industry. Just as the original interstate highway system was an element of our post WW2 national defense strategy, the electrification of the Interstate Highway System can be a pillar of our Climate Jobs Strategy.

### **5. Adopt a High Road Contracting Policy so Taxpayers Dollars Support Good Jobs in the US**

The new Administration has the opportunity to leverage public procurement to promote good jobs, domestic manufacturing and economic demand by adopting the tenets of High Road Contracting. Once this new federal program is in place the Administration can ask state and local governments to adopt similar policies. A High Road Contracting strategy could include: Comprehensive labor standards to ensure high wage and benefits standards and to promote good relationships between workers and employers. It also includes Best Value Contracting to comprehensively evaluate bidders and incentivize high road labor practices, domestic sourcing and sustainability practices.

### **6: Race to The Future – 100% Renewable Energy by 2050**

A variety of actions will be needed to meet the goal of 100% electricity supply from renewable sources by 2050, including:

- 1) Improve existing tax incentives so they better support distributed generation and energy efficiency;
- 2) Make the credits refundable and available in the form of cash grants (no tax liability needed) to offer a direct incentive to businesses, nonprofits, municipalities, tribes, homeowners, including apartment dwellers.
- 3) A new home loan program modeled after VA loans to make affordable end loans for green projects – solar and energy efficiency - widely available. Repayments of end loans under a new Climate Change Loan program could be accomplished through on-bill financing programs, a convenient and low-cost way for utilities to support green loan repayments.

### **7. Connect America's Renewable Resources Through Grid Modernization and Storage**

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”) needs a new agenda focused on supporting large-scale renewable energy development through rules for wholesale electricity markets and interstate transmission

### **8. Just Transition Task Force Appointed by President**

We recommend that the President appoint the Vice President to chair an interagency task force to develop a just transition plan for the workers and communities adversely affected by the transition to a carbon-free economy.

### ***9. Building Codes and Electrification for The Future Project***

There is widespread agreement that reducing energy usage in buildings and switching to renewable electricity is a direct, quick, and cost-effective way to reduce GHG that will also create jobs. The Secretary of Energy should be tasked with developing a plan to ensure that all new buildings and all new appliances will be all-electric by 2035 and to retrofit existing commercial, institutional and residential buildings. A useful starting point is the plan developed by Rewire America.

### ***10. Partner with The Federal Reserve to Support Economic Recovery and Redress the Costs of Pandemic***

The Federal Reserve can provide funds to help state and local governments recover from the Covid-19 Pandemic through their “window” or facility that allows them to purchase state and local bonds. In the federal Cares Act these emergency lending facilities were given almost \$500 billion of funding, much of which remains uncommitted. In addition to the facilities created under the Cares Act there is statutory authority under Section 14 of the Federal Reserve Act (16 12 U.S.C. section 355(1).), for the Federal Reserve to offer short term financing to state and local government. A short-term loan that is rolled over continuously, much like an “open repo” in effect becomes a long-term loan.