

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Kathy Castor
Chair, House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
2052 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

November 22, 2019

Dear Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Select Committee Chair Kathy Castor,

On behalf of millions of members and supporters, we are calling on the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis to endorse the bold actions that science requires and that justice demands in order to limit global temperature rise to below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels — actions that a majority of the United States public supports. Unfortunately the Select Committee's Request for Information fails to solicit information on two of the most critical components of the climate fight: (1) addressing structural inequities that perpetuate injustice and the disproportionate impacts to frontline communities, and (2) ending fossil fuel production - the major driver of climate change.

By framing its request for input myopically, the Select Committee has created a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby the solutions it is likely to recommend only partially address the climate crisis. We can only note our disappointment regarding the Committee's failure this past year to truly reach out to those most harmed by the toxic legacy of our fossil-fuel based economy. In contrast, industry and powerful interests were given a disproportionate voice in the hearings and events held by the Committee. After decades of inaction and defeatist rhetoric about what is possible, our planet can no longer afford incremental or isolated policy tweaks that appear safe to Members of Congress, most of whom will not live to see the consequences of the disastrous choices that they have made. The climate emergency the world now faces requires the courage to champion transformative action in response: a Green New Deal to build a more just and sustainable world.

The need for a Green New Deal is more pronounced than ever, as marginalized communities are impacted by intersecting crises of climate change, increasing income/wealth inequality, and rising white nationalism and neo-fascism. One of the greatest legislative accomplishments of the Democratic Party, the New Deal, excluded and was especially harmful to African American, Indigenous and LatinX people. An inclusive and equitable Green New Deal that centers frontline communities and puts us on the path to a regenerative economy is our last chance to address the climate crisis and dismantle myriad inequities that have gone unmitigated for too long.

The climate crisis is a symptom of a system that exploits and extracts from our natural resources and our people, particularly frontline, vulnerable and Indigenous communities

disproportionately burdened by the fossil fuel economy. These same communities are creating visionary solutions to fight climate change by building a more equitable world, and Members of Congress must translate these visions and actions into transformative policy.

The undersigned groups are eager to work with House leaders to achieve the necessary policies outlined below. We are also prepared to hold legislators accountable if they fail to support bold action. With millions of lives at stake, we need leaders in Congress with the courage to move beyond the decades-old political status quo that protects corporate interests over the health and well-being of our communities. We need leaders who will champion transformative actions to mobilize our government into the decade of a Green New Deal.

In order to meet the challenge of the climate crisis, it is imperative that the Select Committee put forward — and the House adopt — the following five recommendations:

- 1. A commitment to environmental justice that prioritizes support for communities historically harmed first and most.** We must not only invest in prosperity for communities on the frontlines of poverty, environmental racism and pollution, but also follow the leadership of these communities already developing innovative solutions to build sustainable and healthy local energy, food and service systems. The transition to a sustainable economy presents an opportunity to invest in people by creating a federal jobs guarantee with collective bargaining rights and family-sustaining wages. We must take a holistic approach to healthy communities that addresses the disproportionate burden of pollution and environmental degradation, as well as other threats, such as mass incarceration and militarization. We need policies rooted in justice that protect the right to housing and healthcare. And to foster a healthy democracy we must reverse the erosion of voting rights, including ending partisan gerrymandering.
- 2. Respect for Indigenous peoples, lands and sovereignty.** We must honor the treaties protecting Indigenous lands, waters, and sovereignty by the immediate halt of all construction, leasing and permitting for resource extraction, processing and infrastructure projects affecting or on Indigenous lands. We must uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which recognizes that Indigenous Peoples have the right to give or withhold “free, prior and informed consent.” And we must recognize the Rights of Nature into law to protect our ecosystems and align human law with natural law.
- 3. A just transition to phase out the production and use of fossil fuels and switch to 100% renewable energy.** Whether through catastrophic climate change or a planned phase-out, the fossil fuel era is coming to an end. If we wait to act, workers and communities will be left in the cold — but we have an opportunity to implement a just transition that creates good, family sustaining jobs with strong worker and union protections. We must build a cutting-edge, accessible and affordable transportation system. The committee’s work must follow the path of states such as California, Hawaii, Maine, New Mexico, New York and Wisconsin that have already committed to 100 percent clean/renewable energy. We must

end subsidies and giveaways for oil, gas and coal extraction, halt new fossil fuel production, hold fossil fuel companies and utilities accountable for the damage their actions have caused for communities across the country, and begin a managed phase-out of fossil fuel production that puts workers and frontline communities first while prioritizing investments in a clean energy and sustainable future. To succeed, we must reject policies that worsen inequities, such as carbon trading schemes, carbon offsets, and unproven technologies associated with geoengineering, all of which can concentrate dirty projects in marginalized communities and encourage land grabs. We must also reject expensive false solutions that extend our reliance on dirty energy, including biomass, nuclear, and carbon capture and storage that enables continued fossil fuel extraction or is so costly that it takes resources away from cheaper, proven solutions.

4. **Investment in regenerative agriculture/agroecology to build a healthy and just food system.** To fight climate change, we must rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from industrial agriculture, and instead replenish soils and sequester carbon through regenerative and organic farming. We need anti-trust policies to combat consolidation in the food and farming sector, and fair prices for farmers to reverse the rapid loss of farms. Instead of subsidizing agribusiness, we must invest in diversified, resilient local and regional food economies anchored by family farmers, ranchers and fishers that ensure healthy, sustainable food for all. We must also provide increased protections and restitution for Black and Indigenous farmers who have been systematically discriminated against for generations. We must also update federal labor laws to include agriculture and food service workers and ensure fair, family-sustaining wages. We cannot afford to be distracted by false solutions that perpetuate our current industrial monoculture-based food system.
5. **An ambitious emissions reduction timeline in accordance with science.** According to the IPCC's most recent science, we must reduce global emissions by roughly 45 percent by 2030 to have a strong chance at a habitable world in 2050. Legislation enacted and actions taken under the 116th and 117th Congress will be critical to whether the United States succeeds in reducing its share of greenhouse gas emissions in the next decade. We urge the committee to recommend measurable and enforceable emission reduction goals for 2030 and additional key interim targets on the way to zero U.S. emissions well before 2050 in line with the 1.5°C trajectory laid out in the IPCC's report and in line with our historic responsibility as the world's largest emitter.

We have an opportunity to build a better, more equitable and just world. But first we must stop living in fear and rise to the challenge of the climate crisis with courage. Rejecting fear is exactly what people across the country are doing when they join climate strikes, attend forums, make phone calls and take other actions to demand Congress pass legislation to make a Green New Deal the law of the land. We hope you will heed these calls.

Sincerely,

1. Advocates for Springfield
2. Agricultural Justice Project
3. Alabama Interfaith Power & Light
4. Alliance for Energy Democracy
5. Alliance to Protect Our People & the Places We Live
6. Animals Are Sentient Beings
7. Anthropocene Alliance
8. Arise for Social Justice
9. Arvadans for Progressive Action
10. Athens County Future Action Network
11. Back Country Excursions
12. Baltimore Peace Action
13. Bay Area-System Change not Climate Change
14. Berks Gas Truth
15. Better Path Coalition
16. Beyond Extreme Energy (BXE)
17. Big Reuse
18. Breathe Easy Susquehanna County
19. Buckeye Environmental Network
20. Bucks Environmental Action
21. Bus for Progress
22. California For Progress
23. California young Democrats Environmental Caucus
24. Campaign for Renewable Energy
25. Canton Residents for a Sustainable, Equitable Future
26. Cape Downwinders
27. Care for Creation Church of Orleans
28. Center for Biological Diversity
29. Center for Coalfield Justice
30. Center for Environmentally Recycled Building Alternatives
31. Center for Rural Enterprise & Environmental Justice
32. Center for Story-based Strategy
33. Central California Asthma Collaborative
34. Chatham Research Group
35. Church Women United in New York State
36. Citizen Science Community Resources, Inc.
37. Citizens Action Coalition of Indiana
38. Citizens Coalition for a Safe Community
39. Citizens For Water
40. Citizens Regeneration Lobby
41. Citizens United for Renewable Energy (CURE)
42. Citizens' Environmental Coalition
43. Climate Action Group, Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence
44. Climate Action Mondays
45. Climate Action Movement, University of Michigan
46. Climate Action Wisconsin
47. Climate Change Awareness & Action
48. Climate Defense Project
49. Climate Generation
50. Climate Hawks Vote
51. Climate Justice Alliance
52. Climate Justice Committee of CNY Solidarity Coalition
53. Climate March
54. Climate Solutions Digest
55. Coalition Against Nukes
56. CODEPINK
57. Columbia Gorge Climate Action Network
58. Columbus Community Bill of Rights
59. Common Sense Design
60. Communities for Safe and Sustainable Energy
61. Community Alliance for Global Justice
62. Compressor Free Franklin
63. Conservation Congress
64. Courage Campaign
65. CREDO Action
66. Damascus Citizens for Sustainability
67. Deep Agroecology

68. Divest Los Angeles
69. Don't Gas the Pinelands
70. Dr. Bronner's
71. Dryden Resource Awareness Coalition
72. DTM Strategies
73. Earth Ethics
74. Eat for the Earth
75. Eco-Eating
76. EGG350.org
77. Environmentalists Against War
78. Eugene / Springfield NAACP
79. Eugene Interfaith Earthkeepers
80. Fair World Project
81. Faith Communities Environmental Network
82. Faith Communities Environmental Network of Cape Cod
83. Families Advocating for Chemical & Toxics Safety
84. Family Farm Defenders
85. Farmworker Association of Florida
86. Flood Victims of Richwood
87. Florida Student Power Network
88. Food & Water Action
89. Food Revolution Network
90. Fossil Free Penn
91. Fossil Free Tompkins
92. Fossil Free Tulane
93. Fox Valley Citizens for Peace & Justice
94. Frack-Free Frostburg
95. Franciscan Action Network
96. Franklin County Continuing Political Revolution Climate Crisis Task Force
97. FreshWater Accountability Project
98. Friends of Merrymeeting Bay
99. Friends of the Earth U.S.
100. Gas Free Seneca
101. Golden Ponds Farm
102. Grassroots Institute
103. Greater Prince William Climate Action Network
104. Green Education and Legal Fund
105. Green Party Of Nassau County
106. Green Sanctuary, Unitarian Church of Barnstable
107. Green Team, First Congregational Church of West Tisbury
108. GreenLatinos
109. Guilford Peace Alliance
110. Hands Across the Sand
111. Health, Environment, Agriculture, Labor Food Alliance
112. Healthy Gulf
113. Hope Glen Farm
114. Hunger Action Los Angeles
115. Indigenous Environmental Network
116. International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute
117. Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
118. Jackpine Savage Guide Service
119. John J. McCarthy Observatory
120. John Muir Project
121. Justice Commission, Presentation Sisters of Aberdeen
122. Kitsap Environmental Coalition
123. Lisa Hoag Designs
124. Livelihoods Knowledge Exchange Network (LiKEN)
125. Long Beach 350
126. Manhattan Project for a Nuclear-Free World
127. Marshalls Automotive
128. Mid-Missouri Peaceworks
129. Milwaukee Riverkeeper
130. Mission Blue
131. MOM's Organic Market
132. Mormon Environmental Stewardship Alliance (MESA)
133. National Family Farm Coalition
134. Nature Coast Conservation
135. New Jersey Skylands Sunrise Hub
136. New Jersey Tenants Organization
137. New York Communities for Change (NYCC)

138. New York Progressive Action Network
139. New York Progressive Action Network of the Southern Finger Lakes
140. North American Climate, Conservation, and Environment
141. Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York
142. Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont
143. Northern Illinois Jobs with Justice
144. Northern Michigan Environmental Action Council
145. Nuclear Information and Resource Service
146. NYC H2O
147. Ocean Conservation Research
148. Oil Change U.S.
149. Organic Consumers Association
150. Osterville United Methodist Church
151. Our Revolution Southern Oregon
152. Our Santa Fe River
153. Partnership for Policy Integrity
154. Peace Action New York State
155. Peace Boat US
156. Pelican Media
157. Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light
158. Pennsylvania Youth Climate Strikes
159. People Concerned about Chemical Safety
160. People Demanding Action
161. Peoples Climate Movement New York
162. Physicians for Social Responsibility Arizona
163. Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania
164. Post-Landfill Action Network
165. Preserve Bent Mountain
166. Preserve Giles County
167. Preserve Montgomery County
168. Preserve Salem
169. Preserve Wild Santee
170. Progressive Democrats of America, Tucson Chapter
171. Project Coyote
172. Promoting Health & Sustainable Energy
173. Protect All Children's Environment
174. Protect Our Water, Heritage, & Rights Coalition
175. Protect Penn Township
176. RE Sources for Sustainable Communities
177. Refuel Our Future
178. Regeneration International
179. Revolution Los Angeles
180. Richmond Interfaith Climate Justice
181. River Guardian Foundation
182. RootsAction
183. Roseland Against Compressor Station (RACS)
184. Safe Energy Analyst
185. Saint Davids Episcopal Church
186. SanDiego350
187. Sanford-Oquaga Area Concerned Citizens
188. Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
189. Santa Fe River Bill of Rights
190. Save Our Illinois Land
191. Save the Pine Bush
192. Save Wolves Now Network
193. Securing Economic and Energy Democracy of Southwest New Mexico
194. Seeding Sovereignty
195. Seneca Lake Guardian, a Waterkeeper Alliance Affiliate
196. Seven Circles Foundation
197. Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia
198. SoCal 350 Climate Action
199. Solar Solution
200. SolidarityINFOService
201. South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFRST)
202. Spottswode Winery
203. St Bridget
204. Sunflower Alliance
205. Sunrise Movement

206. Surfrider Foundation
207. Sustainable Economies Law Center
208. Sustainable Medina County
209. System Change not Climate Change
Los Angeles
210. Teleport Consulting
211. Temple of Understanding
212. The Climate Mobilization, Hoboken
Chapter
213. The Homestead at Denison
214. The People's Justice Council
215. The River Project
216. The Shalom Center
217. The Wei LLC
218. The Whaleman Foundation
219. Time Laboratory
220. Toxic Free North Carolina
221. Toxics Action Center
222. Transition Sebastopol
223. Unitarian Universalist Association
224. Urban Climate Nexus
225. Utah Physicians for a Healthy
Environment
226. Vote-Climate
227. WATCH (Water and Air Team
Charlevoix)
228. Waterkeeper Alliance
229. WESPAC Foundation
230. West Berkeley Alliance for Clean Air &
Safe Jobs
231. Western Maryland Green New Deal
232. Western Watersheds Project
233. White Rabbit Grove RDNA
234. Wild Nature Institute
235. WildWest Institute
236. Winyah Rivers Alliance
237. Wisconsin Network for Peace, Justice
& Sustainability
238. Xun Biosphere Project
239. 198 Methods
240. 350Brooklyn
241. 350 Butte County
242. 350 Cape Cod
243. 350 Chicago
244. 350 Colorado
245. 350 Columbia
246. 350 Conejo
247. 350 Corvallis
248. 350 Dallas
249. 350 Eugene
250. 350 Fairfax
251. 350 Kishwaukee
252. 350 Mass Metro North Node
253. 350 Mass-Berkshires
254. 350 Montgomery County
255. 350 New Hampshire Littleton
256. 350NYC
257. 350 Philadelphia
258. 350 Sandpoint
259. 350 Seattle
260. 350 Triangle
261. 350 Wichita
262. 350 Wilmington
263. 350 Yakima Climate Action