



**Opening Statement of Chair Kathy Castor
Hearing on “Making the Case for Climate Action:
Creating New Jobs and Catalyzing Economic Growth”
Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
April 20, 2021**

As prepared for delivery

Welcome everyone. And happy U.S. Climate Action Week! I’m so inspired by the level of support we’ve seen across the economy for clean energy solutions and jobs.

Whether it’s public health experts, union leaders, investors, scientists, farmers, or executives at America’s largest companies, we’ve grown an enormous coalition that is ready to solve the climate crisis. Just last week, some of America’s largest employers – including Walmart, McDonald’s, Target, and Starbucks – announced their support for an ambitious new target to reduce our emissions over the next decade. In just a couple of days, President Biden will unveil that new target, as he welcomes global heads of state to his Leaders Summit on Climate. America is ready not only to rejoin the global effort to keep climate impacts in check but lead again. Why? Because we can create millions of jobs and economic opportunities across America.

Last week, we held an important hearing on the costs of failing to act on the climate crisis. So it’s only fitting that today’s hearing will focus on the enormous economic benefits of climate solutions. Building a clean economy will create millions of good-paying jobs across every zip code in America. It will jump-start our economic recovery and ensure we can compete in a world that increasingly runs on clean technologies. And it will strengthen our resilience while helping reduce costs to our communities.

I can’t overstate the importance of reducing those risks and costs. Eleven years ago today, an oil rig operated by BP in the Gulf of Mexico exploded, killing 11 people and ultimately gushing 4 million barrels of oil into Gulf waters. The BP oil disaster cost over \$60 billion dollars to clean up. It cost Florida billions in lost tourism revenue. And it became a painful reminder of the need to move to cleaner sources of energy, instead of waiting for the next disaster to strike.

It’s time we put Americans to work unleashing that potential, which will help us avoid future catastrophes. That’s what the Democrats on this committee proposed last year in our Climate Crisis Action Plan. According to an independent analysis of our Action Plan, we could save Americans more than a trillion dollars annually by 2050 by solving the climate crisis. That’s because switching to cleaner sources of energy will unleash enormous economic benefits for America’s families, including health benefits. As we build that future, we’ll employ millions of workers and ensure they have safe working conditions and family-sustaining wages.

We have a lot of work to do. Whether it’s laying new transmission lines, replacing lead water pipes, or plugging millions of abandoned oil wells across the United States, we’ll make sure

those job opportunities go to our middle-class workers. We can also revitalize the U.S. manufacturing sector through smart investments in 21st century technologies, including electric vehicle chargers and batteries that will power school buses, postal trucks, and more.

Congress has the opportunity to grow jobs across the country, as we advance President Biden's American Jobs Plan. By invoking America's can-do spirit, and rolling up our sleeves to solve the climate crisis, we will help ourselves and the rest of the world. The United States has emitted more carbon pollution than any other country in history, accounting for 25% of historical emissions. While we've cut emissions in recent years, we know from climate science that we need to do even more, and invent and manufacture the technologies in the U.S.A. to provide solutions to the rest of the world.

Today, we have a great slate of witnesses who will highlight the ways we can do that, reducing pollution, driving economic growth, and creating good-paying jobs for all Americans.

I look forward to today's discussion.