

Statement: Environmental Justice for All Act a leap forward

Feb 27, 2020 | [News Release](#)

Today, Chair Grijalva and Rep. McEachin [introduced](#) an environmental justice bill more than a year in the making. Among other things, the bill creates a Federal Energy Transition Economic Development Assistance Fund to aid in a just transition away from fossil fuel economies for workers and communities. In addition, the bill would expand legal rights for people and communities experiencing environmental injustice, and would provide resources for programs to alleviate environmental racism nationwide.

The bill was shaped by a months-long public participation process involving environmental justice advocates and grassroots groups from the outset. The process was based on the Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing, established in New Mexico, and later included an online public comment period on a discussion draft. The Western Environmental Law Center's Ally Beasley provided technical comments on this draft.

"The bill recognizes that environmental justice, climate justice, and health equity are deeply intertwined. Along those lines, it's important to incorporate disparate and cumulative impacts, including health and climate impacts, and the social and structural factors that influence them, in permitting and other decision-making," said Ally Beasley with the Western Environmental Law Center.

"This bill's development also represents a crucial step towards meaningful environmental justice action, which must go beyond getting mere 'input' late in a decision-making or policy process, and should instead be driven by – and in true solidarity with – frontline people and communities, centering their leadership, priorities, knowledge, and expertise at every step, from principle and policy design and development to implementation and action," she added.

"The bill's emphasis on cumulative impacts and meaningful involvement of frontline communities is especially important in light of existing and proposed Trump administration rollbacks that gut fundamental public participation and public health protections," she concluded.

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