



June 4, 2020

Dear New York Congressional Delegation:

Thank you for swiftly passing the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which has provided a critical lifeline to New York families and small businesses reeling from the economic impact of the state shutdown in response to COVID-19. As you are well aware, New Yorkers are experiencing devastating impacts to our communities from the tragic loss of life as well as the economic fallout from the closure of non-essential businesses until it is safe to reopen them.

As we move beyond addressing the immediate public health crisis and focus on restarting our economy, we call on Congress to provide support for renewable energy, energy efficiency, and clean transportation in future stimulus packages. The renewable energy industry has already begun our transition to a clean energy future, and this transition can be accelerated with the right economic signals from Congress. Moreover, this support will ensure that we emerge from this crisis with an economy that is more resilient and better able to support our communities, provide family-sustaining jobs, and protect our frontline communities and all New Yorkers from the looming effects of the climate crisis as well as the public health impacts of fossil fuel-generated air pollution.

Before COVID-19, New York State was well on its way to a green economy, most recently by the enactment of the landmark Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which requires that the state have 100 percent clean electricity by 2040. Achieving these goals will not only reduce air pollution and fight climate change, it will also provide New Yorkers with well-paying jobs for years to come. However, the economic slowdown caused by COVID-19 is putting these goals, and the jobs that come with it, at risk.

Prior to the pandemic, based on NYSERDA's 2019 Clean Energy Industry Report, the state's clean energy industry employed over 158,000 New Yorkers, approximately 123,000 in energy efficiency and 22,000 in renewable electric power generation. More importantly, that number rose 8.9% from 2016 to 2018, more than

double the average job growth in New York. This industry was leading economic growth in New York and could again with assistance to revitalize this industry through supportive federal policies.<sup>1</sup> However, like so many other industries, the clean energy sector has been devastated by the closure of non-essential businesses. It is estimated that in March and April, more than 20,000 New Yorkers who worked in the clean energy sector lost their jobs, including many in the energy efficiency sector, and these job losses are expected to continue in the coming months.<sup>2</sup>

To ensure that we do not lose years of progress on clean energy and to guarantee that New Yorkers who worked in this sector can quickly return to their jobs, Congress should develop a relief package that supports this sector and the broader American economy. In doing so, it should look to past relief packages. For example, The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided over \$90 billion in funding for clean energy and grid modernization. Specifically, ARRA provided immediate funding streams like the 1603 Cash Grant program for renewables and a 30 percent clean energy manufacturing tax credit to give immediate relief for the clean energy industry. As Congress develops this new package, it should consider these and other ideas for the clean energy industry.

Specifically, we believe that any such relief package should contain the following elements:

### ***Clean Energy:***

- **Extend the ITC and PTC:** The investment tax credit (ITC) and production tax credit (PTC) should be extended through 2025. Many projects are delayed due to the pandemic and are only just beginning to restart work, having lost valuable construction time. We are grateful that the IRS has extended the existing program for one year to accommodate the lost work time, we believe a longer time horizon is needed to support additional projects. Moreover, energy storage should be eligible for the ITC. Storage is increasingly becoming a critical component of solar projects and will provide power to a renewables-heavy grid of the future when the sun doesn't shine or the wind doesn't blow.
- **Reinstate the Section 1603 program:** Reinstate this program to deliver payments directly to clean energy developers and suppliers now, rather than make them wait to claim these credits in tax filings. Provide an ITC cash grant, and a refundable PTC option so that all technologies qualifying for PTCs can participate equally and expand the program to cover energy storage and energy efficiency projects. This will result in an immediate and badly needed cash infusion to help clean energy projects keep workers.
- **Increase funding for DOE's clean energy demonstration programs,** including for large-scale energy storage, advanced renewable energy technologies, clean transportation solutions, clean industrial projects, and fuels such as clean hydrogen. DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, which houses most of the agency's existing programs for these technologies, has been shown to provide \$33 of public benefit for every taxpayer dollar invested.
- **Establish New Wind Energy Areas in the New York Bight:** We ask that you strongly urge the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to establish new Wind Energy Areas for the New York Bight. The offshore wind industry is ready to develop such areas and create family-sustaining jobs quickly on new lease areas which will help power a clean energy future.

### ***Energy Efficiency:***

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/About/Publications/New-York-Clean-Energy-Industry-Report>

<sup>2</sup> <https://e2.org/reports/clean-jobs-covid-economic-crisis-april-2020/>

- **Resurrect the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program:** This would allow New York to immediately launch job-intensive energy efficiency and renewable energy projects for schools and municipal buildings. Previous clean energy related block grants created about 63,000 jobs and saved electricity users \$5.2 billion.
- **Support passage of the Home Owner Managing Energy Savings (HOMES) Act:** This bill would create incentives for homeowners to invest in energy efficiency improvements through a rebate program, which would improve the efficiency of a variety of housing stock and improve contractor workforce skills.
- **Extend Section 25C:** Extend the Section 25C homeowner energy efficiency property credit through 2025 in accordance with the framework of the Home Energy Savings Act (S.2588/H.R.4506) for the purchase of energy-efficient equipment or upgrades.
- **Extend the section 45L energy efficient home credit** incentive for building a home that meets certain efficiency performance through 2022 as outlined in the New Home Energy Efficiency Act (S.2595/H.R.4646). Increase the incentive to \$2,500, gradually modernize the energy performance required, and phase out eligibility based on the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) standard starting in 2023, with eligibility in 2023 and beyond only for homes that meet the updated criteria of at least 15% whole-home energy savings compared to homes built to the 2018 IECC standard.
- **Increase funding for DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program,** which provides funding for cost-saving energy efficiency upgrades. The program has supported more than 8,000 jobs and provides weatherization services to 35,000 homes every year.

***Clean Transportation:***

- **Invest in clean cars and clean vehicle infrastructure** through legislation such as the Clean Corridors of 2019 and the EV Freedom Act to create jobs expanding the nation's electric vehicle charging and clean fuel networks.
- **Fund a federal vehicle trade-in program to get cleaner, more efficient and cost-saving cars** in production and to consumers to save jobs now (266,000 in 2019) and create thousands of jobs in the future.
- **Invest in policies to reduce pollution and increase transit options:** Transportation is the number one source of greenhouse gas emissions in New York and nationally. Congress must adopt policies to reduce pollution and provide affordable and accessible transit options for our communities, including investing in the MTA, the lifeblood of the New York metropolitan area; incentivize a shift to zero emission transportation, including electrification; and require transportation infrastructure to be resilient to flooding.

Congressional support for clean energy can and must be part of the economic resurgence needed to protect our families, our communities, and our social fabric. Your leadership can ensure that as we emerge from the economic downturn we advance a green economic package to support renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean transportation that will provide New Yorkers with family-sustaining jobs for decades to come.

Sincerely,

New York League of Conservation Voters

Alliance for Clean Energy of New York

Citizens Campaign for the Environment

Citizens Climate Lobby NY  
The Climate Reality Project Peconic Region Chapter  
Environmental Advocates of New York  
Long Island Contractors' Association  
Mothers Out Front  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
New York Climate Reality Chapters Coalition  
New York State Laborers' Organizing Fund  
New York Offshore Wind Alliance  
New Yorkers for Clean Power  
Real Estate Board of New York  
Renewable Energy LI  
Save the Sound  
Sierra Club  
Students for Climate Action  
Urban Green Council  
Win With Wind

**Sent to the members of the New York Congressional Delegation:**

Senator Chuck Schumer  
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand  
Representative Anthony Brindisi  
Representative Yvette Clark  
Representative Antonio Delgado  
Representative Eliot Engel  
Representative Adriano Espaillat  
Representative Brian Higgins  
Representative Hakeem Jeffries  
Representative John Katko  
Representative Peter King  
Representative Nita Lowey

Representative Carolyn Maloney

Representative Sean Patrick Maloney

Representative Gregory Meeks

Representative Grace Meng

Representative Joe Morelle

Representative Jerry Nadler

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

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Representative Kathleen Rice

Representative Max Rose

Representative José Serrano

Representative Elise Stefanik

Representative Thomas Suozzi

Representative Paul Tonko

Representative Nydia Velázquez

Representative Lee Zeldin