

August 10, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
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The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader, United States Senate  
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The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee  
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The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations  
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Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Shelby, and Ranking Member Leahy:

The COVID-19 public health crisis has imposed challenges on our nation unlike anything we have seen in recent memory. It has devastated American public health and economic stability, and its painful repercussions will be felt for years to come.

The first waves of the U.S. government response rightly focused on disaster relief, distributing emergency resources to the healthcare providers, communities, businesses, and individuals in need. But now, it is critical to ensure that federal investments in rebuilding our economy are made strategically and responsibly.

In early March 2020, over [3.2 million Americans](#) worked in clean energy, more than any other energy sector. Clean energy industries have been [growth sectors of the U.S. energy economy](#) over the past decade, and wind and solar accounted for the [fastest-growing occupations](#) in America. Before the pandemic, these sectors were all ripe for further workforce growth, with many clean energy businesses [reporting greater demand than availability](#) of skilled workers. Now, more than half a million clean energy workers have lost their jobs.

Supporting the clean energy industry would create both immediate AND long-term benefits by generating well-paid manufacturing and construction jobs in every part of the country while creating a stronger, healthier, and more resilient future for our nation. Clean energy investment will strengthen our economy, put people back to work, and create even more jobs in the future. Our nation's workers, our economy, and our climate, cannot afford the cost of inaction.

With your leadership and partnership, the clean energy industry can power America into a thriving tomorrow. As cleantech CEOs, supply chain providers, entrepreneurs, and partners, these are our recommendations for any upcoming economic stimulus or infrastructure packages:

**1. Leverage federal investments to put clean energy workers back on the job**

While many clean energy projects sit idle, the clock continues to run out on soon-to-expire tax incentives. Congress should provide a forward-looking extension of the credits for renewable energy, energy efficiency, carbon capture and removal, and alternative fuel and electric vehicles to help get these industries back on their feet and provide a lifeline to the more than 3 million Americans employed in these sectors. Moreover, Congress should make these credits refundable (and/or available as a direct payment) to more readily deploy investment capital and help make energy improvements affordable for businesses and homeowners who have experienced a reduction in taxable income this year.

This extension should also provide parity to various technologies currently left out of the tax code, such as storage, offshore wind, waste heat to power, and linear generators, and strengthen and modernize energy efficiency credits. It is critical to design these refundable credits in such a way to be workable for all technologies. Such a program could help put hundreds of thousands to work building America's clean energy economy, and revive American manufacturing and put our country back to work.

## **2. Bolster federal research, development, and deployment to restart our nation's innovation engine**

As we move into recovery, we also need to develop and rapidly scale new technologies that will help us regain our leadership in the global economy. This work begins with the entrepreneurs across this nation who are developing new energy solutions that will power our local economies.

Supplemental appropriations provided in the economic stimulus bill or FY2021 omnibus should significantly boost internal and extramural clean energy programs at the Department of Energy and other federal agencies. Once the immediate crisis is over, it is time to double down on the federal RD&D programs that support energy innovation, commercialization, and deployment. Lawmakers should also make sure federal RD&D programs are accessible and impactful for small businesses, which account for more than 99% of U.S. employer firms and will be critical to our economic recovery.

## **3. Promote strategic investments in resilient infrastructure**

As we rebuild from this crisis, we should address long-standing vulnerabilities in how we power our businesses, homes, and critical infrastructure. The current pressures on our healthcare system, emergency response providers, grocery stores, utilities, goods movement providers, governments, and other critical infrastructure are unparalleled. An unprecedented number of people are now working remotely and remaining isolated in their homes. At this time, any major power outages could be devastating.

As Congress decides how to prioritize investments in a stimulus bill or other infrastructure legislation, we urge lawmakers to direct resources toward advanced energy solutions that will

strengthen our energy resilience. Hundreds of thousands of clean energy jobs are at stake. Our nation's workers, and our climate, cannot afford the cost of inaction.

Thank you for the important work you are doing to help the United States weather this crisis. We are committed to working with you to rebuild a stronger America and look forward to partnership as we build a booming clean energy economy, together.

Sincerely,

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