

May 13th 2020

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

Across New York City, the highest rates of job loss¹² and death³ from COVID-19 are in low-income communities of color. These are the same communities that will continue to be hit hardest by the fiscal crisis our city is now facing and by the worst effects of climate change.

New York City needs a plan to reopen the economy, and a plan that can put New Yorkers back to work. This job creation plan must simultaneously take aggressive, bold action to tackle climate change and create direct opportunities for coming out of an economic collapse.

That's why we're writing to you today. We urge you to include our [Climate and Community Stimulus Platform](#)⁴ as part of the plan to reopen the economy. Significant federal government funds are available right now to finance this plan.

We must invest now in putting thousands of New Yorkers back to work building a better, more sustainable city.

Our proposed Climate and Community Stimulus Plan recognizes the urgency of both the climate crisis and the need for COVID-19 recovery through infrastructure projects that address both-creating living wage union jobs and moving us towards our climate goals.

Our plan targets energy efficiency improvements in buildings, because buildings are the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in NYC and retrofits would create a significant number of jobs throughout the economy. The implementation of Local Local Law 97 alone could create more 40,000 jobs.⁵ These will include direct jobs like electricians, HVAC mechanics and installers, carpenters, plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters, insulators, building operations and maintenance workers, architects, civil engineers and more. The energy savings from these infrastructure projects will be additional sources of revenue that will flow back into the economy.

¹ Shierholz, Heidi. "Economic Policy Institute." *Economic Policy Institute*, 23 Apr. 2020, <https://www.epi.org/blog/in-the-last-five-weeks-more-than-24-million-workers-applied-for-unemployment-insurance-benefits/>.

² <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/comptrollers-fy21-executive-budget-presentation/>

³ "Virus Is Twice as Deadly for Black and Latino People Than Whites in N.Y.C." *The New York Times*, 8 Apr. 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/nyregion/coronavirus-race-deaths.html?>

⁴ <https://alignny.org/resource/new-york-city-climate-and-community-stimulus-platform/>

⁵ Climate Works for All "Constructing a Greener New York Building by Building" p.4 <https://alignny.org/resource/10284/>

Local manufacturing hubs in industrial zones and waterfront hubs can be turned into larger engines of green job creation where New Yorkers are trained to build and assemble the goods and parts needed for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. Electrification of our transportation system is also critical to drawing down carbon emissions and can provide additional green job opportunities in constructing public charging stations, incentivizing personal electric vehicle usage, and electrifying our ports. Furthermore, expanding our city's recycling, composting, and waste reduction programs throughout the five boroughs will help drive down emissions while putting people back to work.

All in all, we estimate that at least 100,000 green good jobs can be created if all these recommended components of a green stimulus plan are pursued and funded. That's a goal worth achieving.

According to our analysis, \$1.8 billion in new funds from the federal government, along with \$2 billion in available FEMA funds that must be spent down by September 2022, are crucial sources of funding for this green stimulus effort. But other sources of funding should be considered too.

The Federal Reserve recently established a new \$500 billion Municipal Liquidity Facility to provide financial relief to cities and states hit hardest by COVID 19. This is another way to fund our proposed job creation projects, especially if the bond payback period is expanded beyond 3 years.

Now is the time to invest in an equitable recovery from COVID-19 through the creation of good career-track jobs in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and resilient infrastructure that will empower frontline communities.

Sincerely,

The Climate Works for All coalition and allies

ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York
Brooklyn Movement Center
Chhaya CDC
Jewish Climate Action Network NYC
New York Renews
New York State Nurses Association
Nos Quedamos
NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
NY NJ Regional Joint Board, Workers United/SEIU

Pratt Center for Community Development
Sierra Club
Sunrise NYC
UPROSE
WE ACT for Environmental Justice

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