

## Messaging on A Climate-Smart Recovery

These messages are intended to support you in crafting your message as you advocate for a climate-smart COVID recovery. They are based on best practices in creating [inclusive and effective messages](#).

### The Simple, Clear Message

*There is both a strong economic case and widespread support from the business community and the public for policies that revive our economy, create jobs, help those who need it most, **and** reduce risks from climate change. We support a climate-smart recovery.*

### What do we want decision-makers to know?

Make sure to craft your messaging to simple, clear points to ensure lawmakers walk away with the most important takeaways:

- As business leaders, we are deeply concerned about the current track we are on with managing climate change. None of us want to experience this kind of economic crisis ever again. While COVID-19 will eventually have a vaccine, there will never be a vaccine for climate change. We urge you to support a recovery that helps to put us on a path to net zero emissions by 2050.
- There is widespread support for these proposals. (See polling below.)
- We are already acting on these concerns and doing everything we feel we can within our businesses. We cannot do it alone. The private sector needs to work in partnership with the public sector. We need economy-wide change. This is how you can help our business grow and thrive.
- The recommendations we are presenting today offer an unmissable opportunity to address our most critical challenge—reviving the economy and creating jobs—while simultaneously addressing another critical challenge we'll face—climate change. (See data below.)

### Messages to Address Lawmakers' Core Concerns & Values:

- **Climate action is an economic solution:**
  - The economy is in a shambles, and we need economic recovery and job creation. There is an immediate need to relieve the hardships being faced by individuals, families, and businesses and to revive the economy.
  - A climate-smart recovery provides a path to create millions of well-paying jobs, help those most in need, and get the economy up and running again, while addressing the growing risk of climate change.
- **Voters want this:** There is widespread support from the business community and the public for a climate-smart recovery.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is an election year for many so being on the popular side of an issue is an advantage.

- **This is about health and preparedness:** This is a moral issue. We must act to prevent another crisis like COVID from happening again. If we have learned anything from COVID-19 it is that we must not wait; we must be prepared.
- **This will define your legacy:** *“How we rebuild America is how we will be remembered.”*<sup>2</sup> We don’t want to be on the wrong side of history. The U.S. risks being left behind on innovative energy systems, infrastructure and technology and the new economy. A climate-smart recovery will help ensure continued American competitiveness.

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## Data to Support the Recommendations

### Climate Change and Job Creation

- Decarbonizing the economy could quickly create 25 million jobs, according to a [new report](#). It calculates, in detail, what it would take to aggressively transition to a clean energy economy in the U.S. by 2035—the timeline needed to make it possible to hit the target of the Paris climate agreement. *“For a world looking to bounce back from a pandemic, there is no other project that would create this many jobs,”* the authors write.
  - Note: This shows that we have the technology today to decarbonize, by scaling up existing technologies, materials and practices; we do not need to wait for technologies to be developed.
- *“A Bold stimulus plan could provide family-sustaining jobs for over 9 million people every year for the next 10 years while building an economy that fosters cleaner air and water, higher wages, healthier communities, greater equity, and a more stable climate.”* - [New economic analysis](#) from the Political Economy Research Institute, as taken from the Sierra Club’s [Millions of Good Jobs: A Plan for Economic Renewal](#) (5/20)
  - *That stat includes supporting over 1 million manufacturing jobs each year. Here’s the sectoral breakdown of the 9 million jobs per year:*
    - 4.6 million jobs per year to upgrade our infrastructure for clean water, clean transportation, and clean energy;
    - 3.2 million jobs per year to expand renewable energy;
    - Over 700,000 jobs per year to increase energy efficiency; and
    - Over 500,000 jobs per year to restore our lands and invest in regenerative agriculture.

### Public Support for Renewable Energy and Climate Action Inclusion in the Stimulus

- *Two-thirds (67%) of Republican and Republican-leaning voters agree making investments in clean energy are important to our nation’s effort to rebuild the economy after the coronavirus shutdown.*
  - *Three-quarters of respondents support federal action to accelerate the development and use of clean energy in the United States.*

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<sup>2</sup> From young conservatives fighting for a clean future. [www.accc.eco](http://www.accc.eco)

- Cite: [Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions](#) (CRES), a conservative organization advancing clean energy policies, 6/20
- This poll from [The Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication, Climate Nexus](#) (6/20) demonstrates the widespread support for all of the recommendations in the Principles and Recommendations document.
  - Support for a clean economy:
    - ***About seven in 10 (71%) voters support legislation to achieve a 100% clean economy by eliminating fossil fuel emissions from the transportation, electricity, buildings, industry, and agricultural sectors in the United States by 2050. By more than a two-to-one margin, voters believe this transition will have a positive (58%) rather than a negative (26%) impact on jobs and economic growth.***
  - Energy:
    - *More than three-quarters support federal funding to upgrade the electric grid and expand the production of renewable energy (78%), help state and local governments improve the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings (78%), and install solar panels to reduce electricity bills in low-income communities (77%).*
    - *Seven in 10 (70%) voters say the federal government should prioritize the clean energy industry over the fossil fuel industry for stimulus funding.*
    - *Three-quarters (73%) support setting stronger fuel efficiency standards for cars, trucks, and SUVs*
  - Resilience, Equity and Justice:
    - *Nearly three-quarters (73%) support increasing federal funding to protect vulnerable low-income communities and communities of color from immediate environmental dangers and extreme weather.*
    - *Roughly two-thirds (66%) support creating a National Climate Bank to fund public and private sector projects to reduce carbon pollution and prepare communities to withstand the effects of climate change.*
  - Support for Industries of the Future and Maximizing the Benefits to the American Taxpayer
    - *Seven in 10 (70%) say airline companies that receive stimulus funding must create and implement a greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan*
    - *About eight in 10 say companies that receive federal stimulus funding must comply with environmental and labor regulations (80%)*
  - Buildings/Energy Efficiency:
    - *There is strong support for tax credits and other incentives for individuals to improve the energy efficiency of their homes (84%); for homeowners, landlords, and businesses to purchase appliances that don't use fossil fuels (74%); and for companies to produce battery storage systems for renewable energy (73%).*

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## The Two Most Frequent Questions/Comments from Conservatives

### **Question One: Why should we act if China and India keep burning fossil fuels?**

Excerpted and modified slightly from [Citizens Climate Lobby](#):

*China, the U.S., and India together emit half of the world's greenhouse gases, but the U.S. emits the most per person by far. Prior objections that China and India had not committed to reducing emissions are no longer valid, since both signed the Paris Agreement and are also taking action to address climate change. For instance:*

- *China: In 2014, China launched seven regional carbon trading pilots, and is now transitioning to a nationwide carbon trading system. As of 2018, China had installed over 400 gigawatts of renewable electricity, more than double that in the U.S. China has unquestionably become the world's leading clean energy investor.*
- *India: India has made aggressive commitments to renewable energy in their power and transportation sectors and has made a national commitment to deploy 450 gigawatts of renewable energy across the country by 2030. That's equal to more than 800 U.S. coal plants!*

The steps we need to take to address climate change are going to be the economic drivers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is in the financial interest of our nation to lead the technological innovation that will fuel the energy revolution. This isn't about keeping up with China, it's about going beyond that to ensure our leadership and competitiveness into the future.

Another important point is that if we tax carbon in the U.S. we can put a "border adjustment" assessment on imported goods, leveling the field for products made in America.

### **Question Two: Can't we just plant trees?**

Tree planting is an important step—one of *many* that are needed to reverse global warming and draw carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. But planting trees alone is not enough. We need to pull gases out of the air *and* reduce emissions.

Imagine a bathtub with a spout pouring water in, and a drain letting water out. To lower the water in the tub we need to stop adding water while we simultaneously drain water out. Similarly, while we plant more trees and other nature-based solutions that pull CO<sub>2</sub> from the air, we must simultaneously stop adding more to the atmosphere.

There is no one "silver bullet" to solve the climate challenge. We need to deploy clean energy, electrify our transportation and vehicles, stop deforestation, curb energy consumption as well as natural solutions such as climate-smart, regenerative agriculture and tree planting, and many other practices to decrease the concentration of global warming gases in our atmosphere.