

To: Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer

CC: President Biden

From: 120 local, state, regional and national organizations representing labor, conservation, young people, national service, and the movements for racial, economic, and climate justice.

Date: September 10, 2021

### We Need a Big, Bold Civilian Climate Corps

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer,

We the undersigned organizations write to express our support for a bold, ambitious Civilian Climate Corps (CCC) that would put young Americans to work serving their communities and tackling the climate crisis. We encourage you to move swiftly to pass the full \$3.5 trillion reconciliation package, including a robust CCC. We are grateful to the Senate for its strong commitment to the CCC of at least \$30B and urge you to maintain that level of funding in the reconciliation bill.

President Biden recognized the potential of a Civilian Climate Corps when he included it in his American Jobs Plan and FY2022 budget. Tapping into enthusiasm for the sweeping social programs of the New Deal era, the possibility of a modern CCC remains one of the most popular, exciting components of the AJP. Americans want the opportunity to serve their communities, tackle the most pressing threat facing our country, and earn family-sustaining wages. The CCC would let them do so, through national service work that ranges from installing solar panels to supporting disaster resilience and recovery. With high-road service and workforce development standards and strong environmental justice requirements, an ambitious Climate Corps would train a generation of climate leaders, kickstart the climate workforce mobilization, and directly combat systemic racial injustice by prioritizing resources and job creation in underserved communities. Since the President's announcement, more than 80 members of Congress have [come out in support](#) of this very vision.

Young voters widely support this vision. Half of all voters under 45 say they would consider joining the Climate Corps if a job was available to them. The new CCC would provide unprecedented economic opportunities to those young Americans, who are unemployed at nearly double the rate of the total population. Like the COVID recovery package's \$1,400 checks, putting young people into high-quality national service positions to tackle climate change and on pathways to good-paying, union jobs would make precisely the kind of visible policy change in Americans' lives that can demonstrate the power of government to serve its people.

The federal government must be ambitious to take on this task. AmeriCorps and the federal agencies, state service commissions, conservation corps, and other partners that it works with

through its existing interagency agreements provide a ready-made infrastructure upon which the CCC can be built. They have the necessary authorities and experience to implement the CCC, as well as the relationships at the state and local level to ensure that its efforts are driven by communities' needs. Additionally, it is critical that the CCC set corpsmembers up for success during and after their year of service-- and that this holds true across all national service programs. This means providing a living allowance of at least the equivalent of \$15/hour for all corpsmembers, plus healthcare, childcare, and educational benefits that would help corpsmembers and their families thrive. Corpsmembers should also receive technical and vocational training during their service, including through pre-apprenticeships in partnership with local union chapters, to open pathways to stable careers in the clean economy.

As such, we are calling for the majority of \$30 billion of funding designated for the CCC to be directed towards AmeriCorps to pay for living allowances, benefits, educational awards, and training of all Civilian Climate Corps members, as well as equally raising the benefits of all AmeriCorps programs to make national service more accessible to all people. This will provide the infrastructure upon which the Administration can build a big, bold CCC with complementary funding for, and participation of, a wide array of government agencies including the Departments of Interior, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Energy, and Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Civilian Climate Corps must also advance environmental justice and correct the racially exclusionary practices of the original Civilian Conservation Corps. It must be a viable opportunity for all young Americans, and it must address the disproportionate burden on communities of color across the country from the overlapping harms of toxic pollution, economic disinvestment, and other structural inequities. The CCC can be a force to directly combat those inequities and support these communities.

To that end, any new CCC program should direct half of corps investments into overburdened communities, and recruit at least half of its corpsmembers from those same places. The program should also ensure gender equity, provide opportunities for corpsmembers of a range of ages and abilities, give corpsmembers opportunities regardless of immigration status, protect tribal sovereignty, and more. And by prioritizing local recruitment and engaging in local consultation on project design and implementation the CCC can ensure that its climate action is sustainably driven from the bottom-up, rather than top-down and targeted at impactful projects.

The Civilian Climate Corps is an opportunity to clearly demonstrate the commitment and power of the federal government to mobilize a workforce to stop the climate crisis. As you are finalizing reconciliation text and funding amounts, we, the undersigned groups, urge you to direct

at least \$30 billion towards this historic and popular program that centers job creation, environmental justice, and direct community investment.

Sincerely,

America's Service Commissions  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
Blue America  
Build-back-fossil-free  
Climate Justice Alliance  
Climate Reality Project  
CODEPINK  
Common Defense  
Conservation Lands Foundation  
Data for Progress  
Defend Our Future  
DNC Environment and Climate Crisis Council  
Evergreen Action  
Greenpeace USA  
Indivisible  
Our Climate  
Our Revolution  
People's Party  
Public Citizen  
Service Year Alliance  
Sierra Club  
Sunrise Movement  
The Corps Network  
198 Methods  
2degrees Northampton  
350 Bay Area Action  
350 Butte County  
350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley  
350 Eugene  
350 MA Berkshires  
350 Triangle  
4BLM  
Alaska Community Action on Toxics  
Appalachian Mountain Club  
Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education  
Avid4 Adventure  
Berggruen Institute  
Boston Catholic Climate Movement  
Broward Soil & Water Conservation District, Seat 4  
Courage California  
CleanChoice Energy  
Climate Action Now  
Climate Changemakers

Climate Hawks Vote  
Climate Reality Baltimore Area Chapter  
Climate Reality Boston Metro Chapter  
Climate Reality Project Massachusetts Southcoast  
Friends of the Earth US  
Green New Deal Network  
GreenLatinos  
GreenFaith  
Indigenous Environmental Network  
National Recreation and Park Association  
NDN Collective  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE)  
Working Families Party  
Zero Hour  
Christians For The Mountains  
Community Action Works  
Cream City Conservation Corps  
Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action  
The Enviro Show  
ERTC of Holyoke  
Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay Area  
FCCPR Peace Task Force  
FracTracker Alliance  
Franciscan Action Network  
Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution  
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance  
Greening Greenfield  
Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy  
Highest Good  
Hispanic Access Foundation  
Hometown Action  
Indian Orchard Citizens Council  
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth  
Island Institute  
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement  
kccPLAN  
Lead For America  
Loudoun Climate Project  
Planning Board  
Loudoun County Board of Supervisors  
Marked By COVID

Mid-Ohio Valley Climate Action  
Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
Moms Clean Air Force  
Mothers Out Front  
NC Climate Justice Collective  
Neighbor to Neighbor MA  
NM Climate Justice  
North American Association for Environmental  
Education  
North Parish of North Andover UU Climate Justice  
Group  
Organic Consumers Association  
PennFuture  
PGF / FYC  
Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania  
Protect Our Water Heritage Rights (POWHR)  
The Rachel Carson Council  
The Shalom Center

Social Justice Commission (Episcopal Diocese of  
Western Massachusetts)  
SOS Outreach  
Springfield Climate Justice Coalition  
States for Service Coalition  
Sunflower Alliance  
Sunrise Fairview  
Sunrise Knoxville  
TOTAGO LLC  
Transition Town Media  
Traprock Center for Peace & Justice  
UCC, Amherst, MA  
UnKoch My Campus  
US High Speed Rail Association  
Washington Trails Association  
Wendell State Forest Alliance  
Western Mass Climate Action Now