

SOLVING THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The Congressional Action Plan for a Clean Energy Economy and a Healthy, Resilient, and Just America



Making Our Communities More Resilient

Communities are on the front lines of the climate crisis, contending with the effects of rising temperatures, increasingly severe storms, damaging wildfires, persistent droughts, acute river flooding, and chronic tidal inundation. Since 2005, the United States has experienced more than 150 billion-dollar events with more than \$1.1 trillion in economic losses. These climate impacts exacerbate long-standing social, racial, and economic inequities, with our most vulnerable at the greatest risk and with the least capacity to adapt. Many state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) leaders are taking steps to prepare their communities, but they need a strong federal partner to meet the urgent and growing need.



CREATE A CLIMATE RESILIENT NATION

The massive scale of the challenge before us—preparing the country for the climate impacts to come—demands a commensurate federal response. Congress should call for a unified, all-of-government approach that prepares communities, especially those on the frontlines of the climate crisis, to confront future threats to assure social, environmental, and economic resilience against the changes that we can no longer avoid.

CONGRESS SHOULD:

Develop and deploy actionable climate risk information to help SLTT leaders understand how the climate crisis will increase the frequency or severity of floods, wildfires, droughts, extreme heat, and severe storms in their jurisdictions.

Prepare communities for the unavoidable impacts of the climate crisis by launching a new National Climate Adaptation Program to advance resilience-based standards; provide skilled technical assistance to SLTT leaders to support adaptation planning; and invest in climate-resilient housing, infrastructure, and ecosystem restoration.

Prepare for the physical and mental health effects of the climate crisis by improving the resilience of public health supply chains; ensuring hospitals can withstand climate impacts; and supporting SLTT planning for all potential impacts, especially in vulnerable populations.

Ensure the federal government leads by example in climate adaptation and resilience in policy and program design, investments, priorities, and strategic planning.

Restore and protect natural resources to leverage the services that healthy ecosystems provide for community resilience.

Partner with tribes and Indigenous communities for climate adaptation and resilience by removing barriers, building capacity, and increasing and dedicating funding to accelerate adaptation.

Transform the nation's infrastructure to withstand extreme weather and climate impacts by ensuring federally supported infrastructure meets climate-informed standards for siting, design, maintenance, and rebuilding.

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CONGRESS SHOULD:

Strengthen the National Flood Insurance Program by enhancing flood risk mapping and information about increasing flood risk in the future; reducing uninsured loss; addressing insurance affordability; strengthening incentives to preserve flood-prone areas as open space; ensuring that analyses reflect extreme rain events that overwhelm urban drainage systems; providing community-wide flood insurance; and making flood risk information more transparent for property transactions.

Reduce climate disaster risks and accelerate disaster recovery by increasing pre-disaster mitigation; advancing resilience-based building codes and land use and development standards; helping rural and frontline communities overcome barriers to access needed technical assistance and funding; reforming the tax code to remove disincentives for investments in resilience; permanently authorizing community disaster recovery programs to reduce payment delays; and increasing the role of insurance and innovative finance to support rapid and resilient recovery from disasters.

Support community-led voluntary, just, and planned transitions from the riskiest areas by providing information on future dangers, technical assistance to help communities plan ahead, and funding to help those who are ready to move to safer ground.

Advance resilience-based codes and standards for strong housing and buildings by ensuring that federally supported development and rebuilding meets climate-informed standards against flood, wind, and wildfire threats.

Prepare for longer and hotter wildfire seasons by improving mapping of fire-prone areas, reducing wildland fuels that can threaten communities, and increasing federal support for community planning, technical assistance, wildfire risk mitigation.

Address the national security risks of the climate crisis by enhancing interagency and intersectoral coordination; identifying and responding to climate impacts on national security, Armed Forces missions, global conflicts, and geopolitical instability; and ensuring that federal procurement, strategic planning, and decisions for military installations incorporate climate risks.

