



AFL-CIO

AMERICA'S UNIONS

**American Federation
of Labor and
Congress of Industrial
Organizations**

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March 8, 2019

The Honorable Edward Markey
U.S. Senator
255 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
U.S. Representative
229 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Markey and Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez:

As Congress considers a variety of potential actions to address climate change, it is critical that the voices of American workers be included in the discussion, especially those who are most at risk of job disruptions and economic dislocation as a result of those actions. All policy makers must fully engage labor in the deep discussion needed to understand our views on these critical sectors and the jobs of our members.

America's labor unions agree that climate change must be addressed, and we agree on the need to invest in the development and deployment of technologies like solar, wind, nuclear, hydro-electric, carbon capture and utilization, battery storage, and high-speed rail that limit or eliminate carbon emissions. We know that the increase in natural gas production has lowered emissions in the power sector and provided a new source of construction and manufacturing jobs. We must invest in energy efficiency in the industrial and commercial sectors, retrofits and upgrades to schools and public buildings, and to make our communities safe and resilient. All of these investments must be paired with strong labor and procurement standards to grow family-sustaining, middle-class union jobs.

The fact is that the labor movement has been working on these very issues for decades, and have advanced several potential solutions over that time that could provide a basis for solid, realistic action.

We welcome the call for labor rights and dialogue with labor, but the Green New Deal resolution is far too short on specific solutions that speak to the jobs of our members and the critical sectors of our economy. It is not rooted in an engineering-based approach and makes promises that are not achievable or realistic.

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We will not accept proposals that could cause immediate harm to millions of our members and their families. We will not stand by and allow threats to our members' jobs and their families' standard of living go unanswered.

We are ready to discuss these issues in a responsible way, for we all recognize that doing nothing is not an option. We want to engage on climate issues in a manner that does not impinge on enacting other labor priorities, especially much needed infrastructure legislation. As key specialists in jobs touching every facet of the energy and industrial sectors, we have much to add to this discussion and look forward to working with lawmakers from both parties to address this critical issue.

On behalf of the AFL-CIO Energy Committee,



Cecil E. Roberts
International President
United Mine Workers of America (UMWA)



Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)

Laborers International Union of North America (LiUNA!)
United Association (UA)
United Steelworkers (USW)
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers (IBB)
Ironworkers (IW)
Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA)
International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE)
North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU)

CC: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate