

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 20, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, 20500

Dear President Biden,

For too long, we have been waiting for a single piece of legislation, and a single Senate vote, to take bold action on our climate crisis. While we will continue to fight for whatever climate and clean energy proposals can pass in a divided Senate, Congressional action to address the climate crisis appears to have stalled. As a result, we urge you to put us on an emergency footing and aggressively use your executive powers to address the climate crisis, create good-paying union jobs in the United States, and liberate hard-working American families from volatile energy prices. We ask that you start by declaring a climate emergency to unlock the broad powers of the National Emergency Act (NEA) and immediately pursue an array of regulatory and administrative actions to slash emissions, protect public health, support national and energy security, and improve our air and water quality.

Declaring the climate crisis a national emergency under the NEA would unlock powers to rebuild a better economy with significant, concrete actions. Under the NEA, you could redirect spending to build out renewable energy systems on military bases, implement large-scale clean transportation solutions and finance distributed energy projects to boost climate resiliency. All of these actions would employ Americans in new and emerging industries while securing American leadership in global markets.

We do not urge you to declare a national emergency lightly. We fought President Trump's efforts to misuse executive power and sideline Congress, including to build a wasteful and destructive border wall. A president's emergency powers should not be used wantonly. What we cannot afford, however, is to shy away from tackling the climate crisis just because President Trump misused the NEA. If ever there is an emergency that demands ambitious action, climate chaos is it.

Similarly, you cannot shy away from directing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to rapidly develop a bold array of rules to reduce carbon dioxide, methane, and other pollutants from coal- and gas-fired power plants, cars and light trucks, heavy-duty vehicles, and oil and gas facilities. These actions will help protect public health nationwide – particularly in environmental justice communities - and fulfill the EPA's statutory requirements under the Clean Air Act. Your Office of Management and Budget should forthwith promulgate an updated social cost of carbon and require its use throughout government decision-making, including in areas such as procurement and the determination of royalty rates where it can be particularly effective. Your Interior Department should move boldly to limit carbon pollution from fossil fuels

produced on public lands and waters, and your Energy Department should update a plethora of energy efficiency rules and promote the deployment of energy efficient technologies that will reduce carbon pollution and save consumers money. Your Department of Transportation should maximize the adoption of electric vehicles and the electrification of our mass transit. Your Department of Defense, the world's single largest consumer of oil and one of its top emitters, should transition its non-tactical vehicle fleet to electric and zero emission vehicles, install solar panels on military housing, and take other aggressive steps to decrease its environmental impact. Likewise, your Justice Department should investigate the fossil fuel industry for its decades of lying about its products and consider bringing a civil suit against the industry the way it successfully sued the tobacco industry. An emergency demands all this and more.

The climate crisis is one of the biggest emergencies that our country has ever faced and time is running out. We cannot allow a single Senator to stall our progress. Addressing this crisis head-on, with the full authorities you possess is a win for the environment, public health, the planet, American workers, American consumers, and our national security interests. We urge you to act boldly, declare this crisis the national emergency that it is, and embark upon bold regulatory and administrative action.

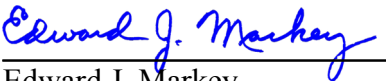
Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



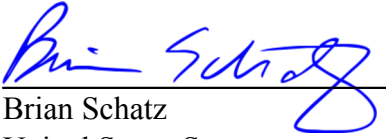
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



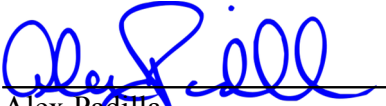
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator