

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 4, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy House
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As Congress continues negotiations to advance legislation to build a stronger, more equitable, and more just economy, we urge you to include robust funding for environmental justice related initiatives. While environmental justice and ensuring equitable economic opportunity remain key priorities for the Biden Administration and for the Democratic Caucus, investments in environmental justice related programs included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework fall far short of what is necessary to fully mitigate the impacts of environmental racism and environmental inequity on our communities and ensure that they are not left behind as we look to build a sustainable economy.

The decades-old legacy of racism and environmental inequity has made environmental justice communities – including low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal and indigenous communities in the U.S. and U.S. territories particularly vulnerable. Members of these communities are more likely to reside in areas with higher levels of pollution or live on the ‘fenceline’ of industry and transportation corridors. These communities endure inadequate access to safe drinking water and quality healthcare, face the ill effects of air pollution, both indoors and outdoors, and bear other impacts of disproportionately high pollution levels. These injustices have been further compounded by the economic collapse caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has further triggered high rates of unemployment and slow economic recovery within non-white communities.

As Congress considers historic investments to build back better, we urge robust investments in programs that will deliver relief to these communities and ensure that these communities, left out of the conversation for too long, are able to thrive. We must prioritize investments that: provide quality water and ensure drinking water services, increase access to and investment in clean energy and energy efficiency programs, accelerate the deployment of zero emissions

transportation and goods movement, support programs that support workforce development and pollution reduction, and address health impacts and support programs that improve the health of environmental justice communities.

All Americans should have the right to clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment, regardless of their zip code or socioeconomic status. The Administration has taken action to ensure that these rights are upheld through the Justice40 Initiative and a whole-of-government approach to environmental justice. As Congress moves to make historic investments to ensure that our economy remains strong, we urge you to prioritize the needs of environmental justice communities.

It is critical that Congress make community investments in a way that will ensure equity, justice, and healthier outcomes for all. We stand ready to work with you, and thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,



A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



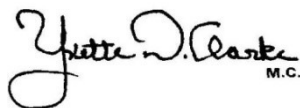
Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Nannette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress