



May 20, 2022

Dear Members of Congress:

As health organizations, we represent physicians, nurses, mental health professionals, public health and health care professionals, health scientists and researchers, patients and advocates all dedicated to promoting health and saving lives. Climate change is a health emergency. Addressing it by transitioning the nation to clean, renewable electricity and clean transportation will avoid the worst health impacts of climate change and achieve immediate improvements in air quality and health at the same time. That is why our groups strongly support the climate investments passed by the House in 2021.

Air pollution and climate change are impacting the health of millions of Americans now, and the passage of bold climate investments into law is crucial for mitigating worse impacts in the future. Emissions from fossil fuel or other combustion-based operations are worsening air quality, which is especially harmful for children, seniors, pregnant people, people with respiratory illnesses and people who work or play outside. These same emissions are also driving climate change and with it, sweeping and dramatic health harms. More intense and frequent wildfires, strong storms and persistent extreme heat are already causing physical and mental harm. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report released in February

painted a grim picture of the future should we fail to aggressively limit greenhouse gas emissions.¹

As a result of numerous current and legacy racist policies and practices, people of color are disproportionately more likely to have multiple pre-existing health conditions, to face social disadvantages and environmental risks that make them more vulnerable to climate change. People of color are also 3.6 times more likely than white people to live in areas experiencing the worst air pollution.²

As you negotiate a path forward to seeing investment legislation passed into law, we urge you to recognize the urgency of climate action and to include the following provisions:

- **Establish long-term clean energy tax incentives.** Ten-year tax incentives for clean electricity, energy storage and transmission will help drive innovation and deployment of pollution-free energy, and the inclusion of these tax incentives in the final bill will represent a large portion of the emissions reductions needed to reduce climate-warming greenhouse gas emissions 50% by 2030.
- **Rapidly transition to zero-emission vehicles and technology.** The transportation sector is the largest contributor to greenhouse gases and a significant source of air pollution. Making it easier to purchase electric vehicles, including medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, through tax credits and incentives, paired with investments in the necessary charging infrastructure to support them, will have immediate health benefits by way of reductions in air pollution and long-term benefits by reducing climate pollution.
- **Commit to environmental justice by ensuring 40% of investments in clean air go to frontline communities.** Any efforts to reduce air and climate pollutants should not worsen existing inequities and should direct benefits to the communities that have been disproportionately burdened by air pollution and climate change.

Investing in efforts to reduce climate change is an opportunity to protect both physical and mental health— particularly for underserved communities – that Congress and the nation can't afford to miss. The below organizations urge swift and bold investments towards a healthier future.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association

Allergy & Asthma Network

¹ IPCC, 2022: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Lösschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, B. Rama (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. In Press.

² American Lung Association. State of the Air. Apr 2022. www.lung.org/sota

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American College of Physicians
American Lung Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Arkansas Public Health Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Center for Climate Change and Health
Children's Environmental Health Network
Climate for Health/ecoAmerica
Climate Health Now
Climate Psychiatry Alliance
Gundersen Health System
Health Care Without Harm
Illinois Association of Nurses
Indiana Public Health Association
Interfaith Public Health Network
Maine Public Health Association
Medical Students for a Sustainable Future
MI Air MI Health
Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action
Mothers And Others For Clean Air
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Birth Equity Collaborative

National Hispanic Medical Association

National League for Nursing

New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association

New York State Public Health Association

NJSOPHE

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

Public Health Institute

Utah Public Health Association

Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action

Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility

Wisconsin Asthma Coalition

Wisconsin Health Professionals for Climate Action

Wisconsin Public Health Association