

United States Senate

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Wyden:

As Congress takes steps to ensure that our nation's workforce is prepared to emerge stronger from the coronavirus health and economic crisis, we must act to shore up clean energy businesses and workers who are uniquely impacted by the crisis. This action, which has precedent in prior financial recovery efforts, could take several forms, including tax credit extensions or removal of the current phase-out schedule, direct payment or refundability, or extensions of safe harbor continuity.

First and foremost, we need to take care of workers' health and immediate needs to stay in their homes and provide for their families, and the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* is a critical down payment. Now, we must make sure the workforce has jobs to return to and that employers remain able to pay for critical benefits like paid sick and family leave, healthcare, and Unemployment Insurance.

The renewable energy industry employs over 800,000 people across every state in the United States. This industry and its workers could suffer significant harms a result of the coronavirus emergency and resulting financial impact. Renewable energy businesses are already seeing project cancellations or delays, with the solar industry reporting delays of 30 percent. Likewise, the energy efficiency sector is susceptible to similar impacts. As the coronavirus pandemic intensifies in the United States, that rate of delay or cancellations will only continue to skyrocket. Global and domestic supply chains are already facing chaotic changes, with equipment delays of three to four months for parts of the industry. A major collapse in financing is all but certain as investment firms' profits turn to losses and capital is suddenly unavailable for large labor-intensive investments.

To ensure that we do not lose years of progress on clean energy and the source of employment for tens of thousands of renewable energy workers, Congress should look to previous relief packages as an example for how to support this sector and the broader American economy. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (also known as the Recovery Act or ARRA) provided over \$90 billion in funding for clean energy and grid modernization, along with

emergency relief programs. Specifically, ARRA provided immediate funding streams like the 1603 Cash Grant program for renewables and the 30 percent clean energy manufacturing tax credit to give immediate relief for the clean energy industry. As Congress develops this new package, it should consider these immediate relief programs for the renewable and clean energy industry. This could include direct payment or refundability, extensions of safe harbor continuity, tax credit extensions, electric vehicle credit expansion, or removal of the current phase-out schedules for the clean energy industry.

We need to make sure that any package protects workers and helps families stay afloat in these challenging times. Providing support to the clean energy industry will give much-needed certainty and confidence for those workers that they will be able to keep their paychecks and their jobs in this critical industry.

These strategies to provide assistance to the clean energy industry must be included in any financial recovery discussions, particularly if the Trump Administration continues its push to aid the oil industry. We appreciate your consideration and collaboration as we do everything in our power to quickly recover from this health and economic emergency.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY
United States Senator

MARTIN HEINRICH
United States Senator

SHELDON WHITEHOUSE
United States Senator

TINA SMITH
United States Senator

JACK REED
United States Senator

CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator

AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
United States Senator

DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator

JACKY ROSEN
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DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator

TAMMY DUCKWORTH
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CHRISTOPHER A. COONS
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MAZIE K. HIRONO
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RICHARD J. DURBIN
United States Senator

KYRSTEN SINEMA
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