

Building an Inclusive Green Economy for All Americans Through the Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act

In June, the House of Representatives passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES). Now the Senate is crafting its own climate and energy legislation to move America forward into the new century. The Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act, introduced by Senators Kerry and Boxer, can kick-start our struggling economy, creating clean energy jobs and putting American industries at the global forefront of the burgeoning clean energy sector.

But creating such an economic boom alone will not ensure that all Americans get to enjoy the jobs, opportunities and benefits of that boom. That is why Senators Kerry and Boxer included in this bill two key provisions from ACES that will make the promise of this new economy real for those workers and communities struggling the most in these tough times. These provisions also ensure that employers have the pool of qualified workers they need to rebuild and repower America.

As the Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act moves through the Senate, the bill should be strengthened to maximize funding for green jobs and include the strongest possible climate standards. It also must maintain the following two provisions, which are central to expanding access and opportunity in the clean-energy economy:

1. The Green Construction Careers Demonstration Project

The **Green Construction Careers Demonstration Project** creates middle class careers in the green economy for low-income Americans. It allows the Secretaries of Labor and Energy to target employment and training opportunities in green construction to workers and communities who traditionally have had little access to career-track jobs with high-road contractors in the building trades. Specifically, the demonstration project:

- **Builds a green career pipeline and ensures that only qualified workers build covered projects.** Construction contractors in projects within the demonstration would collaborate with high-quality apprenticeship and training programs that admit high numbers of local, low-income workers and utilize pre-apprenticeship programs.
- **Creates employment opportunities for local communities and workers.** Fully qualified local, low-income workers must perform a minimum percentage of all construction work hours on covered projects. This ensures that communities most in need get a direct economic benefit from these federal investments.
- **Enables uniform work rules for major projects.** On large projects, the proposal allows the Secretary of Labor to enact community workforce agreements that establish uniform labor and workplace safety standards, and coordinate and reinforce the proposal's targeted hiring goals and training programs.

2. Funding for The Green Jobs Act

The Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act allocates allowance value to the Green Jobs Act. The bill allocates 1% of allowance value in 2012 and 2013 and 0.05% in 2014 and 2015. In ACES, the House allocated 0.75% of allowance value — an estimated \$860 million — to the Green Jobs Act in 2012 and 2013.

- **The Green Jobs Act is an existing program.** The Green Jobs Act (Title X of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007) trains workers, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, for jobs in the clean energy economy -- and leverages significant private sector money in doing so.
- **Green industries will be able to hire qualified workers.** Job-creating renewable energy and energy efficiency employers need skilled workers. The Green Jobs Act will prepare those workers, allowing these industries to maximize productivity and ensure high quality work.
- **The Green Jobs Act creates green pathways out of poverty.** Workers suffering the worst effects of the recession and of pollution will get the training and support they need to find middle-class careers in the green economy.

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