



Fossil Fueled Foolery

*An Illustrated Primer on the Fossil Fuel Industry's
Deceptive Tactics*

SECOND EDITION

**NAACP ENVIRONMENTAL AND
CLIMATE JUSTICE PROGRAM**

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Overview

On September 17th, 2020, the public art piece, "Metronome," installed ten stories high in Manhattan's Union Square, was reprogrammed to countdown Earth's life. The Climate Clock¹ now displays the remaining time until climate conditions become irreversible – if we do not make the critical shifts necessary to save our environment, health and wellbeing. With each tick, we are reminded that if greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, global temperatures will lead to devastating climate effects.

The Climate Clock in Manhattan began its countdown from seven years, 103 days, 15 hours, 40 minutes, and seven seconds. At the time of this primer's release, April 1st 2021, the virtual climate clock (Climate Clock²) reads approximately six years, 309 days, 19 hours, 58 minutes, and four seconds. Between the Climate Clock's first tick and now, less than a year has passed and we have experienced:



- Record-breaking storms³ making landfall and reaching "hurricane" status in the U.S.;
- GOP representatives continuing to push skewed climate agendas that protect fossil fuels companies⁴ that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions; and
- A massive snowstorm⁵ in Texas that left millions without water and power during below-freezing temperatures.

Although it is April Fools' Day, indeed, this is no joke.

Yet, the conservative-based, American Legislative Exchange Council's (ALEC) position on Environmental Stewardship⁶ openly states on their website, "*The reality of the situation,*

¹ Machemer, T. (2020, September 22). Clock in New York counts down the time remaining to avert climate disaster. Retrieved from <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/clock-new-york-counts-down-time-remaining-avert-climate-disaster-180975881/>

² The climate clock. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://climateclock.world/>.

³ Chinchar, A., & Miller, B. (2020, August 30). Climate change didn't cause Hurricane Laura but it did make the storm worse. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/30/weather/weather-hurricane-laura-climate-impacts-scope/index.html>

⁴ Siegel, J. (2020, February 12). House Republicans unveil 'realistic' climate plan focused on capturing carbon from fossil fuels. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/energy/house-republicans-unveil-realistic-climate-plan-focused-on-capturing-carbon-from-fossil-fuels>

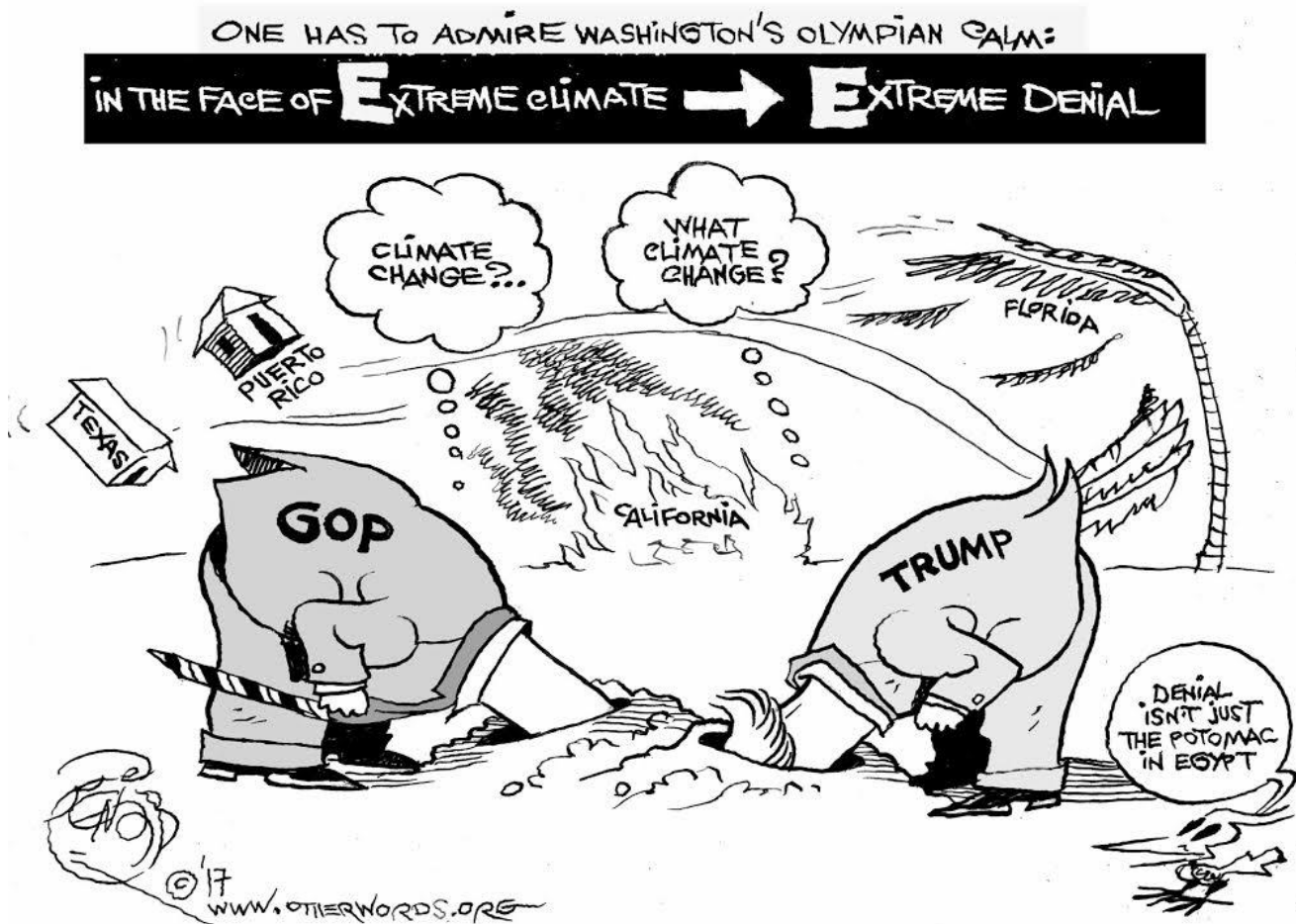
⁵ Texas' frozen power grid is a preview of climate Change disasters to come. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/texas-power-outage-storm-climate-change/>

⁶ Environmental stewardship. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.alec.org/issue/environmental-stewardship/>

however, is that it is an amazing time to be living in the U.S. and environmental quality has hardly ever been better than it is today."

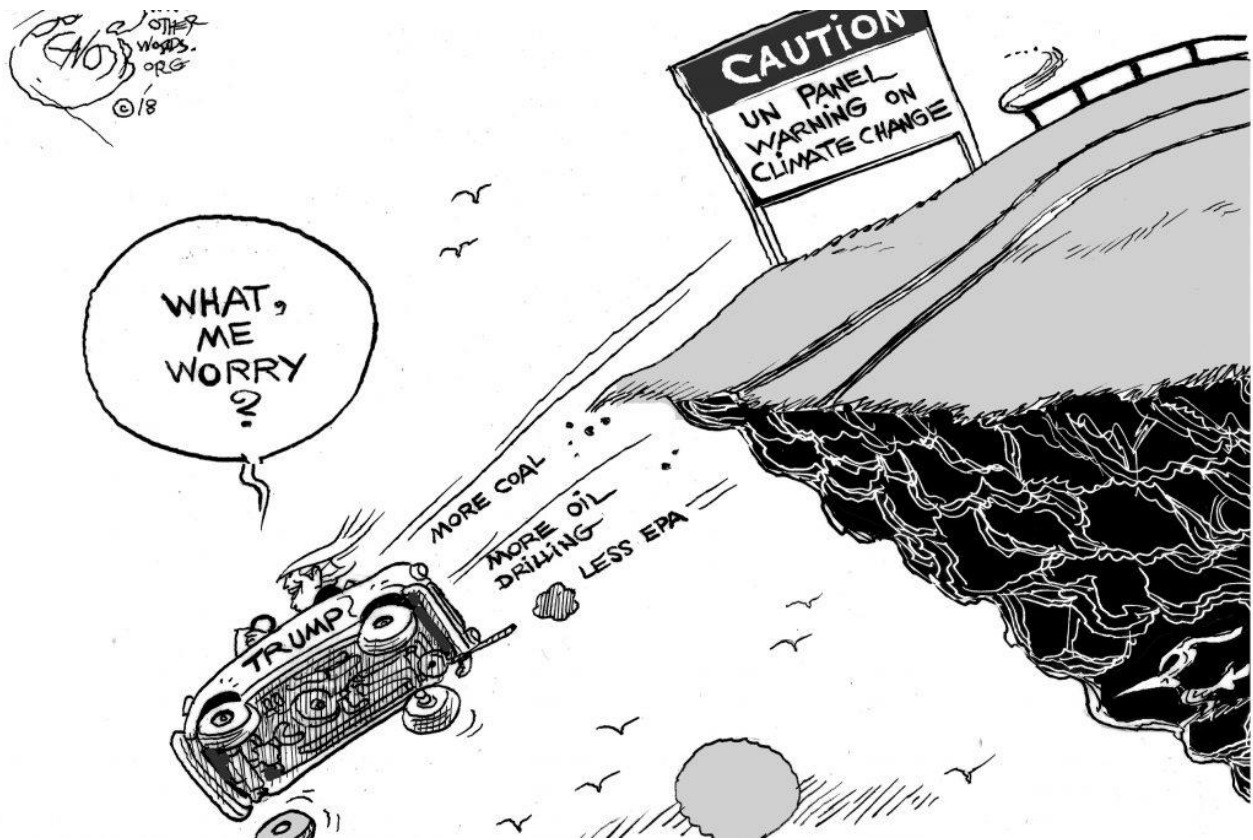
Yep. You'd expect to see "April Fools!" but they manage to make such ridiculous claims with a straight face!

The NAACP's inaugural edition of the *Fossil Fueled Foolery* primer, 2019, shed light on the deceptive tactics used by fossil fuel conglomerates and their supporters at the expense of communities most affected by their pollution. They will deny any responsibility, but we're not fooled, they are responsible for the dire climate conditions.



Communities already fraught with decades of disenfranchisement, disinvestment, and displacement are now also subject to the worst effects of climate change. Not to mention the observed health-related risks due to increased toxins in the environment within Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and low-income communities. In 2021, the effects of a respiratory-based pandemic have intensified these inequities, ravaged the economy, and accelerated the need for environmental and healthcare solutions.

You would think this would be enough of a call to action. Instead some of the world's largest banks⁷ still funnel trillions of dollars into fossil fuels (\$2.7 trillion since the Paris Agreement). This is going on even after the adoption of the Paris Agreement (Dec. 2015), and the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) requirement for urgent and aggressive action on eliminating greenhouse gas emissions.



Reports published by the NAACP such as -- *Coal Blooded: Putting Profits Before People, Fumes Across the Fenceline, and Lights Out in the Cold: Reforming Utility Shut Off Policies as if Human Rights Matter* – highlight fossil fuel companies' exploitative tactics that conceal their environmental destruction and diminish their social and economic harm.

Climate effects are not always what meets the eye. There are invisible effects on community cohesion and emotional support systems that pose deep, visceral threats to a community's internal resilience.⁸ So, no - environmental quality is not "hardly ever been better than it is today." The more they deny, the more communities suffer.

Yet, there's hope. Next to the virtual Climate Clock, there is a "lifeline" - a percentage of the world's energy from renewable resources. At the time of this primer's release, we are at 28% of energy from renewable resources. For the sake of our future and our children's future, we must strive to reach 100% before the Climate Clock times out.

⁷ BankTrack, Indigenous Environmental Network, Oil Change International, Rainforest Action Network, Reclaim Finance, and Sierra Club. (18 March 2020). Banking on climate change, 2020. Retrieved from <http://ran.org/bankingonclimatechange2020>

⁸ Lipsitz, G. (2007). The racialization of space and the spatialization of race theorizing the hidden architecture of landscape. *Landscape Journal*, 26(1), 10-23.

We must empower communities most affected by climate change to network resources and develop community-driven strategies. We know that the scales are “tipped” and to beat wealthy corporations at their own game, we must be knowledgeable about the strategies and tactics they use. When we take up this fight, we fight for us: our histories, our identities, our health. We must, as Shirley Chisolm notes, be “Unbought, Unbossed, and Unbamboozled.”

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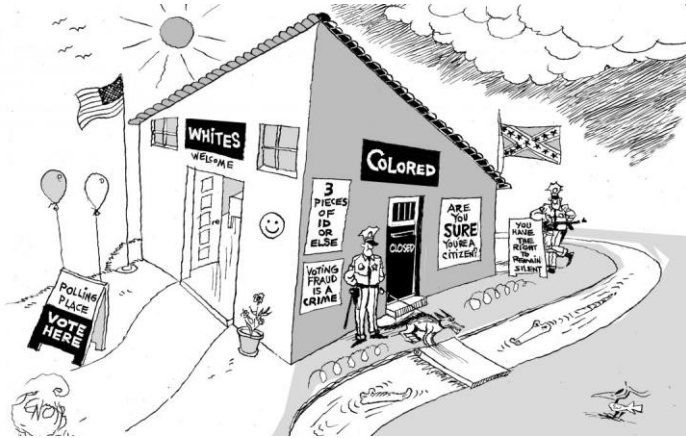
Each tick of the Climate Clock is a rallying beat to save our communities most at risk in the face of irreversible climate change. In accordance with the NAACP's longstanding commitment to justice and civil rights, the purpose of this primer is to:

- to identify and describe the common tactics used by the fossil fuel industry and associated supporters that not only promote their agendas, but embed climate injustices;
- provide real facts on the issues; and
- provide stories and strategies of action and advocacy within our communities that ground resistance to injustices caused by the fossil fuel industry.

Top 10 Fossil Fuel Industry Tactics

- 1. Invest in Efforts that Undermine Democracy**
- 2. Finance Political Campaigns & Pressure Politicians**
- 3. Fund Scientists and Scientific Research Institutions to Publish Biased Research**
- 4. Say Government Regulations Hurt the Economy and Low-Income Communities**
- 5. Deny or Understate the Harms Polluting Facilities Cause to People and the Environment**
- 6. Deflect Responsibility – Shift Blame to Communities They Pollute**
- 7. Co-opt Community Leaders and Organizations and Misrepresent the Interests and Opinions of Communities**
- 8. Exaggerate the Level of Job Creation and Downplay the Lack of Quality and Safety in Jobs**
- 9. Praise False Solutions While Claiming that Real Solutions are Impractical, Impossible, or Harmful for BIPOC and Poor Communities**
- 10. “Embrace” Renewables to Control the New Energy Economy**

Invest in Efforts that Undermine Democracy



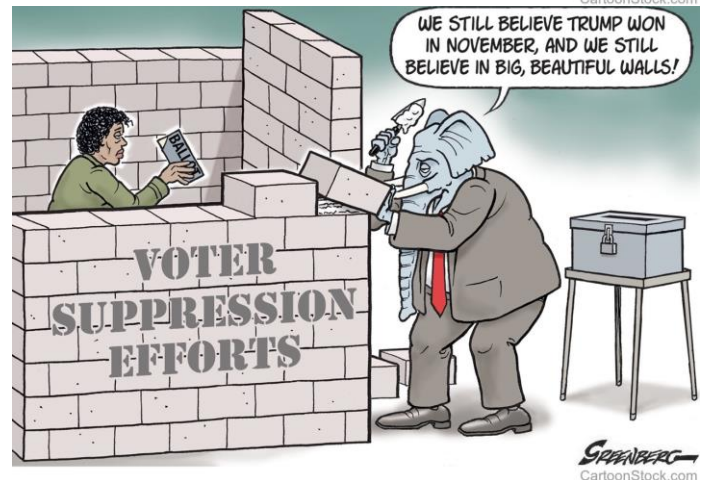
"I don't want everybody to vote. Elections are not won by a majority of people. They never have been from the beginning of our country, and they are not now. As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections quite candidly goes up as the voting populace goes down."

ALEC founder, [Paul Weyrich \(1980\)](#)

Political disenfranchisement is a frequently used tactic that restricts groups most affected by the issues on the ballot from voting. Fossil fuel companies including Peabody Coal, Duke Energy, and of course Koch Industries, have historically paid substantial membership dues to groups like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), who specialize in drafting "pre-packaged," state legislation to manipulate and/or suppress voting rights.⁹

Notorious for its broad, anti-civil rights policy agenda¹⁰, ALEC is most strategic in restricting voting in BIPOC communities. ALEC's corporate members' have "deep pockets" to finance legislation from voter ID laws to redistricting and gerrymandering. During the 2020 election amid the pandemic, mail-in ballots and early voting provided ways to exercise a citizen's right to vote. ALEC members worked quickly to increase barriers and restrictions¹¹.

In addition to suppressing voter rights, ALEC falsely boasts policies against clean air,



⁹ ALEC Corporations. (2019). *Sourcewatch*. Retrieved from https://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/ALEC_Corporations

¹⁰ Taylor, C. (2018, August). ALEC gathering gives platform to hatermonger Horowitz. *The Cap Times*. Retrieved from https://madison.com/ct/opinion/column/rep-chris-taylor-alec-gathering-gives-platform-to-hatermonger-horowitz/article_3002a085-1320-5b70-a278-9b935fae106c.html

¹¹ Koch, A. (2020, June 4). ALEC legislator introduces bill to suppress the vote in Ohio. Retrieved from <https://www.prwatch.org/comment/47047>



energy efficiency, clean energy, and energy sovereignty. ALEC's recent model bills identify fossil fuel facilities as "critical infrastructure."¹² This status restricts public protests often with severe penalties – further harnessing policy to silence voices.

Aside from ALEC, skewed policies as slick as oil that undermine democracy also lurch in through lobbyists with significant political power. Since lobbying is in essence the influence on governmental policies, a network with governmental officials is key. It comes as no surprise that in 2020, it was reported that 28 out of 40¹³ American Petroleum lobbyists have previously held government positions.

In January 2021, Duke faced scrutiny for donating more than \$500,000 through its corporate Political Action Committee (PAC) to Members of Congress who voted to object to the certification of the 2020 U.S. election results in the past three election cycles,¹⁴ including at least \$181,000 in the 2020 cycle.¹⁵ Duke responded to the criticism by announcing a 30-day pause of PAC contributions to federal candidates.¹⁶ However, when Duke issued a new policy on political and lobbying expenditures in March, it contained no pledge to end support for anti-democracy politicians or align its policy influence activities with its net-zero commitment.¹⁷

¹² Kaufman, A.C. (2021, February 20). 4 more states propose harsh new penalties for protesting fossil fuels. Retrieved from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/fossil-fuel-protest_n_602c1ff6c5b6c95056f3f6af

¹³ Center for Responsive Politics. American petroleum institute profile: Summary. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/american-petroleum-institute/summary?id=D000031493>

¹⁴ <https://www.energyandpolicy.org/utility-donations-members-congress-overturn-election/>

¹⁵ List of top Duke PAC donation recipients available as of February 19, 2021 at <https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/duke-energy/recipients?id=D000000477> was compared with the list of lawmakers who objected to the election results after the Capitol Hill attack, available at <https://www.vox.com/2021/1/6/22218058/republicans-objections-election-result>. Note that total amount reported is subject to change if candidates file additional reports or revisions to prior reports of donations received or donations returned during the 2020 election cycle.

¹⁶ <https://www.bpr.org/post/duke-energy-pauses-contributions-federal-politicians-following-insurrection#stream/0>

¹⁷ <https://www.energyandpolicy.org/utility-climate-policy/https://www.duke-energy.com/our-company/investors/corporate-governance/political-expenditures-policy>

Finance Political Campaigns and Pressure Politicians

In 2010, the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* determined that limiting political spending by corporations restricted their constitutional right to freedom of expression. Slyly, the court's decision also shifted political power away from citizens to wealthy corporations and special interest groups.

The State of Ohio, in July 2019¹⁸, passed a law that reversed the state's renewable energy initiatives. This new law, HB6, offered subsidies to increase production at nuclear and coal power plants. The law hurt residents of Ohio, slipping in an additional charge¹⁹ on utility bills that ultimately sent \$150k a year to nuclear power plants. Coincidentally, Ohio Republican House Speaker Larry Householder advocated for HB6 and coal and nuclear power.

One year later, in July 2020, House Speaker Householder was arrested²⁰ in connection with a \$60 million bribery scheme in which First Energy Corp., a top utility company in Ohio (allegedly), paid Householder along with top aids and lobbyists over a 3-year period to "ram through" HB6 into law and destroy any opposing ballot initiatives.

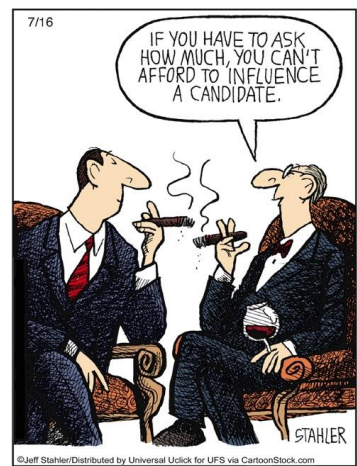
Leading up to the 2020 election, the American Petroleum Institute (API) spent over \$5 million in lobbying practices¹³.

SUPREME COURT DECIDES CAMPAIGN CASH EQUALS SPEECH



"What the hell, Senator—let's cut to the chase."

CartoonStock.com



¹⁸ Chow, A. (n.d.). Ohio's new energy law: What you should know. Retrieved from <https://www.stateneews.org/post/ohio-s-new-energy-law-what-you-should-know>

¹⁹ Wamsley, L. (2020, July 21). Ohio house speaker arrested in connection with \$60 million bribery scheme. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/21/893493224/ohio-house-speaker-arrested-in-connection-to-60-million-bribery-scheme>

²⁰ Pomerantz, D. (2020, July 20). Ohio house speaker Larry Householder arrested. Will FirstEnergy corp. be charged next? What you need to know. Retrieved from <https://www.energyandpolicy.org/householder-firstenergy>

They funneled money to campaign contributions, mostly financing the Senate Leadership Fund – a super PAC that supports the Republican majority.

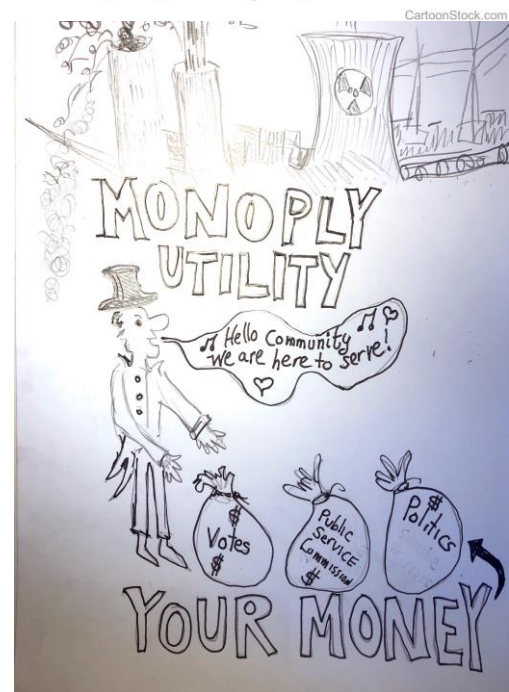
With financial support from the fossil fuel industry, politicians actively support destructive energy practices, falsely claim that emissions, not fossil fuels, are the enemy²¹ and draft diluted environmental agendas that focus on planting trees²² instead of shutting down industrially polluted, cancerous alleys²³.



"I appreciate your offer, but I'm afraid I'm already bought and paid for."

Fund Scientists and Scientific Research Institutions to Publish Biased Research Studies

Author of the *Paradox of Choice*, Swarthmore psychologist, Barry Schwartz, remarked, "when you rely on incentives, you undermine values."²⁴ At U.S. higher education institutions, incentivizing faculty with tenured-track positions and research through external funding channels has done just that in academic research^{25,26}. Reliance on external funding pressures faculty, along with their researchers, to produce research and scholarship that supports their funder's interests. Such conflicts of interest are exemplified at Colorado State University (CSU), who named their College of Natural Resources after fracking tycoon Ed Warner after a \$30 million endowment to the college in 2005. CSU also accepted \$5 million from Exxon Mobil to study the



@Anya Schoolman

²¹ Siegel, J. (2020, January 30). How house republicans won over conservatives to gain consensus on a climate agenda. Retrieved March 15, 2021, from <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/energy/how-house-republicans-won-over-conservatives-to-gain-consensus-on-a-climate-agenda>

²² Friedman, L., & Green, M. (2020, February 19). The republican climate agenda. *The New York Times Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/19/climate/nyt-newsletter-republican-climate-agenda.html?auth=login-google>

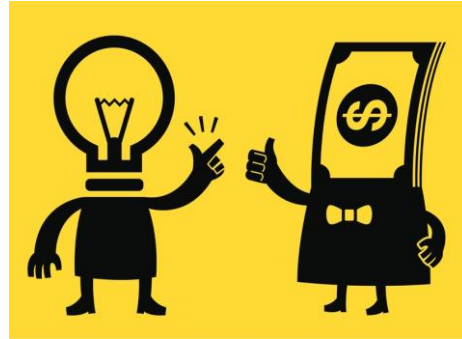
²³ Pasley, J. (2020, April 09). Inside Louisiana's horrifying 'cancer alley,' an 85-mile stretch of pollution and environmental racism that's now dealing with some of the highest Coronavirus death rates in the country. *Business Insider Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/louisiana-cancer-alley-photos-oil-refineries-chemicals-pollution-2019-11#unlike-the-black-soot-that-used-to-linger-in-mining-towns-here-the-pollution-registers-quietly-its-in-the-oily-taste-of-the-water-on-the-blackened-leaves-of-fruit-trees-and-in-the-acrid-odor-in-the-air-according-to-the-washington-post-2>

²⁴ Zetter, K. (2009, Feb. 6). TED: Barry Schwartz and the Importance of Practical Wisdom. *WIRED*. Retrieved from www.wired.com/2009/02/ted-barry-schwa

²⁵ Edwards, M., & Roy, S. (2017). Academic research in the 21st century: maintaining scientific integrity in a climate of perverse incentives and hypercompetition. *Environmental Engineering Science*, 34(1), 51–61.

²⁶ Rouse, W. B., Lombardi, J. V., & Craig, D. D. (2018). Modeling research universities: Predicting probable futures of public vs. private and large vs. small research universities. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 115(50), 12582–12589.

impact of natural gas drilling on wildlife.²⁷ Surprisingly, this report denies and understates the negative impacts of the fossil fuel industry, discredits the practicality and value of clean and renewable energy systems, and refutes the very existence of climate change and the role of human activity in its proliferation.



$E=MC^2$ Enviro-lies = Manipulation X Ca\$h²

The Center for American Progress, in a 2010 report, identified over 50 research agreements between universities and major energy companies, where the companies donated anywhere between \$1 million to \$500 million towards energy-related research.



²⁷ Zaffos, J. (2013). Oil and gas companies pour money into research universities. *High Country News*. Retrieved from <http://www.hcn.org/issues/45.1/oil-and-gas-companies-pour-money-into-research-universities>

Outside of universities and higher education institutions, scientific institutions are also contributing to biased research. In 1997, the National Centre for Cancer Institute (NCI) published a ground-breaking study on the chemical benzene, found in crude oil and gasoline, and its connection to the development of chronic diseases in workers exposed to the chemical. In an attempt to save face, a series of petrochemical companies gave nearly \$40 million to fund scientific research “designed to protect member company interests.”²⁸ Out comes the “Shanghai Research Project,” which spouted research supporting the petrochemical companies’ practices.

The main take away here: we must carefully examine research and especially its funders.

Say Government Regulations Hurt the Economy and Low-Income Communities



Mayor Harry Brower of North Slope Borough, Alaska, wrote an opinion piece²⁹ in the *Wall Street Journal* that criticized policies that pressured banks to limit or restrict funding for gas and oil projects in North Slope and the surrounding Artic areas. Brower claimed these to be racialized policies that “harm Alaska Natives who live in the area and rely on the oil and gas industry for their livelihoods.”³⁰



Republican Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan of Alaska also supported Brower’s position. Sullivan even provided testimony³¹ emphasizing the beauty of Alaska’s landscape that has thrived over the years with drilling and development. Yet, North Slope is warming at rapid speeds with one of its local towns, Utqiagvik, experiencing five, record-breaking warm winters since 2014.³²

CartoonStock.com

²⁸ Union of Concerned Scientists. (2017, October 12). Fossil fuel companies distorted the science about the dangers of benzene. Retrieved from <https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/fossil-fuel-companies-distorted-science-about-dangers-benzene>

²⁹ Brower, H., Jr. (2020, January 24). Goldman Sachs to native Alaskans: Drop dead. *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/goldman-sachs-to-native-alaskans-drop-dead-11579908814>

³⁰ Brooks, J. (2020, June 18). Alaska congressional delegation suggests banks' turn against Arctic oil discriminates against natives. Retrieved from <https://www.adn.com/politics/2020/06/17/alaska-congressional-delegation-suggests-banks-turn-against-arctic-oil-might-be-driven-by-racism/>

³¹ SitNews. (2020, February 7). Sullivan rebukes senate democrats' efforts to block Anwr development. Retrieved from http://www.sitnews.us/0220News/020720/020720_anwr.html

³² Herz, N. (2020, October 19). Big oil's answer to melting Arctic: Cooling the ground so it can keep drilling. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/oct/19/oil-alaska-arctic-global-heating-local-cooling>

Typically, fossil fuel companies portray themselves as job creators and community builders. In this vein, they will frame any regulation against their production to be a harmful to the economy and communities by way of limiting the job opportunities they create and ultimately contributing to America's poverty problem.³³ As Frank Macchiarola, senior vice president for American Petroleum, offers a seemingly heartfelt account on the Biden administration's environmental regulations, "they are taking actions that will harm the economy and cost Americans their jobs. [...] We're concerned, and everyone in the country should be concerned."³⁴

Where is Macchiarola's heartfelt condolences for the communities chronically exposed to toxins in their air, land, and water supplies contaminated by oil refineries?

You're telling me how to manage my environment? Look at this environmental wasteland.

~ Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-AK)



"We just need to cut through all the pesky government red tape."

CartoonStock.com

Deny or Understate the Harms Polluting Facilities Cause to People and the Environment

"In the United States, based on the color of your skin and the money in your bank account, you're literally breathing different air."

~Dr. Robert Bullard³⁵

³³ Bakst, D. (2017, April 5). Big government policies that hurt the poor and how to address them. Retrieved from <https://www.heritage.org/poverty-and-inequality/report/big-government-policies-hurt-the-poor-and-how-address-them>

³⁴ Dlouhy, J. (2021, January 23). Oil industry reels as Biden targets fossil fuels in first days. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-01-23/oil-industry-reels-as-biden-targets-fossil-fuels-in-first-days>

³⁵ Invisible Houston: Full Interview with Dr. Robert Bullard, Father of Environmental Justice Movement. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.democracynow.org/2017/9/7/invisible_houston_full_interview_with_dr

A foul odor blankets the air of Eight Mile, a predominately Black community with many retirees and low-income residents³⁶, in Mobile County, Alabama. The smell – something close to the stench of rotten eggs³⁶ – has saturated the air since 2008, when lightning struck an underground pipe at Mobile Gas Service Corp. and caused a chemical spill.

The company failed to report the spill of an estimated 6,000 pounds of mercaptan, a chemical containing sulfur and carbon that is added to natural gas to detect leaks.³⁷ Mobile Gas still has not confirmed the size of the spill, yet the company stated the “amount lost has always been safe.”³⁸ As of 2016, high levels of mercaptan still filled the air in Eight Mile. As a result, severe respiratory problems pervaded the community and, in 2020, cases of COVID-19 soared for the area.³⁹



CartoonStock.com

**PERSONALLY I WON'T BE CONVINCED
ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE UNTIL I SEE
THE EVIDENCE!**



CartoonStock.com

³⁶ Banerjee, N. (2017, March 17). A tale of two leaks: fixed in California, ignored in Alabama. Retrieved from <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/17032016/mercaptans-eight-mile/>

³⁷ Dermansky, J. (2016, August 5). Eight years after a mercaptan spill, residents of Eight Mile, Alabama, call for evacuation. Retrieved from <https://www.desmogblog.com/2016/08/07/eight-years-after-mercaptan-spill-residents-eight-mile-alabama-call-evacuation>

³⁸ Smith, M. (2017, April 17). Eight mile Is Alabama's chemical Katrina. Retrieved from <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2017-3-may-june/grapple/eight-mile-alabamas-chemical-katrina>

³⁹ Blower, R. (2020, October 21). With COVID-19 taking a new toll, a poor black community in Alabama awaits justice for a 2008 industrial disaster " NCRC. Retrieved from <https://ncrc.org/with-covid-19-taking-a-new-toll-a-poor-black-community-in-alabama-awaits-justice-for-a-2008-industrial-disaster/>

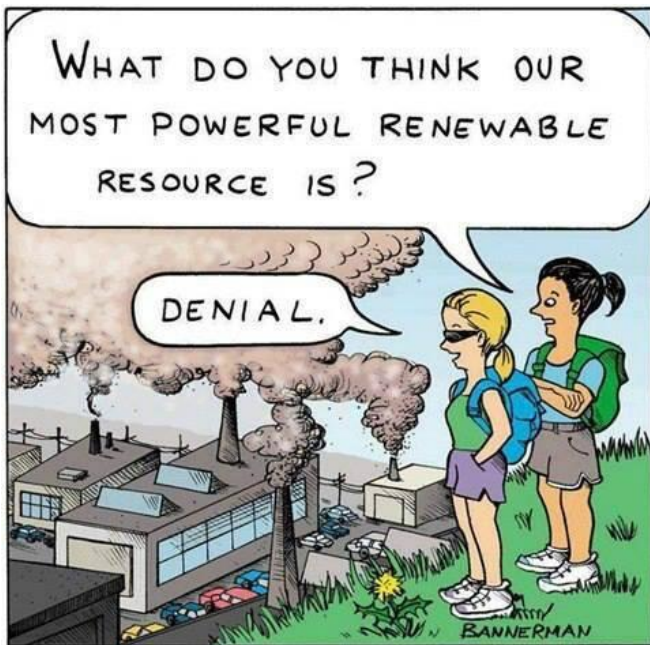
According to a report by the Center for Effective Government,⁴⁰ larger and "more chemical-intensive facilities tend to be located in counties with larger black populations and in counties with high levels of income inequality." In Texas, just outside of Houston, the Harrisburg and Manchester neighborhoods are encircled⁴¹ by nearly 30 refineries and chemical plants, including sewage treatment facilities and hazardous waste sites. In the area of Harrisburg, reports of cancer are approximately 22% higher⁴² than the more affluent Houston area. Demographically, Harrisburg is comprised of 98% Hispanic residents, with many below the poverty line⁴¹.



"Quick – diversify into boats!"

CartoonStock.com

During Hurricane Harvey in 2017, intense rainfall caused a tank failure at a local refinery that led to approximately



"If there are no other ideas, then it's agreed we blame the media."

CartoonStock.com

⁴⁰ Center for Effective Government. (2016, January 15). *Living in the shadow of danger*. Retrieved from <https://issuu.com/foreffectivegov/docs/shadow-of-danger-highrespdf>

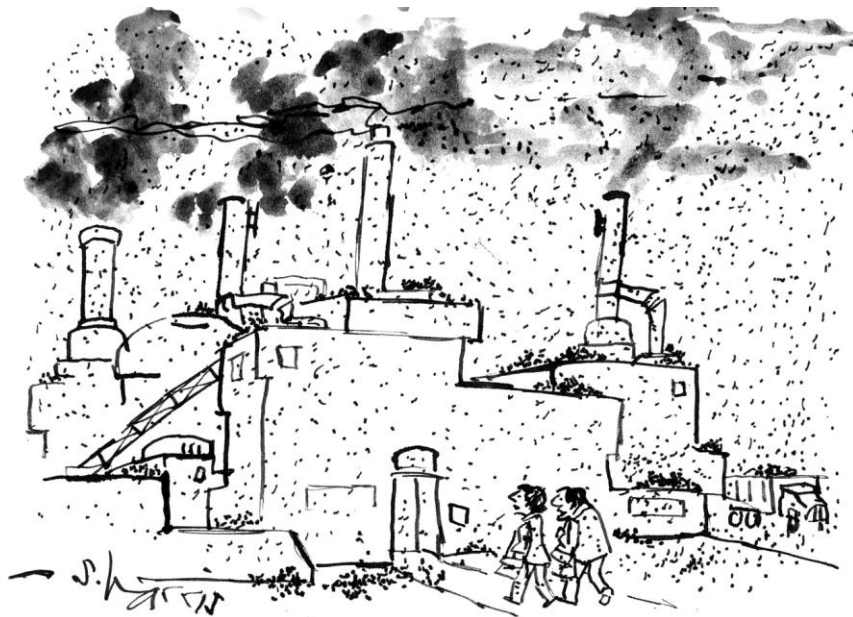
⁴¹ Crawford, J. (2018, March 15). Environmental racism in Houston's Harrisburg/Manchester neighborhood. Retrieved from <http://bay.stanford.edu/blog/2018/3/15/environmental-racism-in-houstons-harrisburgmanchester-neighborhood>

⁴² Mankad, R. (2017, October 11). As Houston plots a sustainable path forward, it's leaving this neighborhood behind. Retrieved from <https://grist.org/article/the-newer-greener-houston-isnt-for-everybody/>

2,000 pounds⁴³ of chemicals leaked into the local area. Despite these outcomes, Texas representative Brian Babin⁴⁴ continues to praise the local industry and honor projects like the Keystone Pipeline with fallacious claims that it “will make America stronger and more secure.”

Fossil fuel companies and their advocates will point to inadequate infrastructure or the lifestyle choices of communities to deflect any responsibility in perpetuating longstanding disinvestment that make such communities most vulnerable to environmental injustices. Injustices such as, in addition to the health hazards described above, displacement caused by natural disasters. Fossil fuel companies will also turn a blind eye on the repercussions displacement has on the systems of aid and support within these communities.

The professor of Black Studies and Sociology at the University of California, George Lipsitz (2007)⁸ perceived that Hurricane Katrina’s effect on vulnerable communities exemplified how working-class, Black residents in communities were often “resource-poor” due to decades of defunding and disinvestment. Yet, in spite of adversities, they were “network-rich” in support systems grounded in solidarities of place. Displacement causes non-tangible losses to community support systems concurrently with physical loss and damage.



"You should have been here last week. This is clean coal."



CartoonStock.com

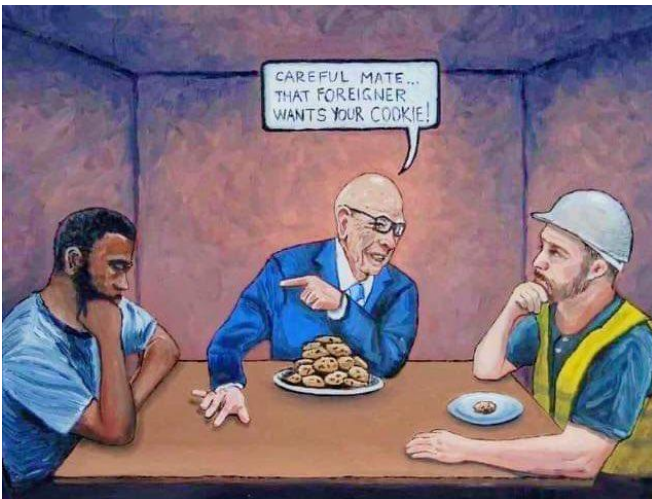
CartoonStock.com

⁴³ Dart, T. (2018, January 29). After Harvey, Houston suburb suffers a persistent problem: Waves of foul air. *Guardian Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/29/houston-manchester-hurricane-harvey-texas-foul-air>

⁴⁴ Babin, B. (n.d.). U.S. Congressman Brian Babin: Energy. Retrieved March 15, 2021, from <https://babin.house.gov/issues/issue/?IssueID=14891>

Deflect Responsibility – Shift Blame to Communities They Pollute

In the New Orleans metropolitan area, nestled along the east bank of the Mississippi River, on the fringes of the French Quarter limelight, three sleepy towns are deemed the sickest of the nation. Laplace, Reserve, and Gramercy are all situated in “Cancer Alley”⁴⁵ – the stretch of land 85-miles long lined with oil refineries and petrochemical plants. Here, the air is reportedly “the most polluted” in the country, and BIPOC and low-income residents suffer the loss of their loved ones who have died from cancer.



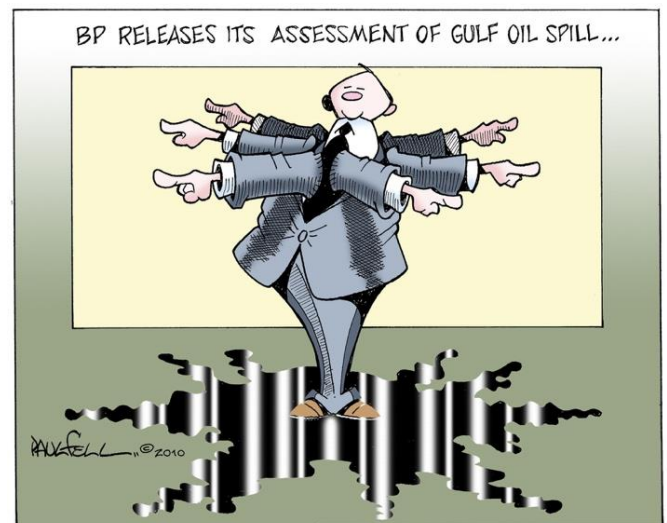
First, Do No Harm, Cassidy....
And to think, he took an oath to do no harm.

In February 2021, when President Biden referred to “Cancer Alley” and its legacy of pollution, the Louisiana Senator Bill Cassidy took the reference as an affront.⁴⁶ He used the expected rhetoric of fossil fuel companies and their supporters, feigning concern for the Louisiana residents who work “tirelessly to make the state cleaner.” Cassidy also attributed the rise in cancer rates to lifestyle choices, deflecting responsibility of the chemical factories and plants pollution. Cassidy received over \$500k in campaign contributions⁴⁷ from the oil and gas industry in 2020.



“Let’s go back to the scenario in which none of this is my fault.”

CartoonStock.com



CartoonStock.com

⁴⁵ Blackwell, V., Drash, W., & Lett, C. (2017, October 20). Toxic tensions in the heart of 'Cancer alley'. *CNN Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2017/10/20/health/louisiana-toxic-town/index.html>

⁴⁶ Baurick, T. (2021, February 03). It's a slam upon our state: Sen. Bill Cassidy rebukes Joe Biden over Cancer alley remarks. Retrieved from https://www.nola.com/news/environment/article_98b5dd56-665c-11eb-993d-ab9537e3b12f.html

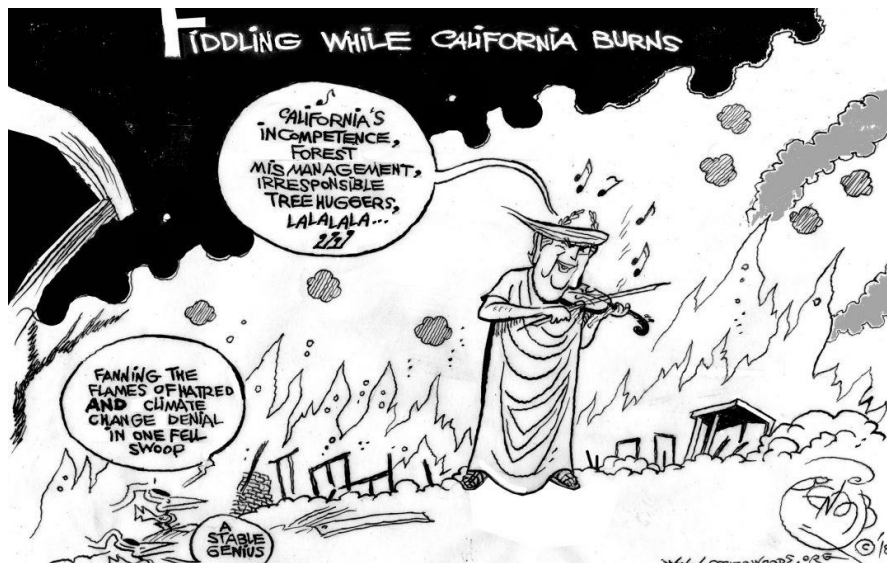
⁴⁷ Center for Responsive Politics. Bill Cassidy: Campaign finance summary. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.opensecrets.org/members-of-congress/bill-cassidy/summary?cid=N00030245&cycle=2020&type=I>



“Years ago, Gene Collins and other residents won a lawsuit against two companies that operate in the area for pollution. He said he has tried to work with oil and gas companies to determine a way to capture the methane and liquefy it. The companies, he said, would rather ‘play games’ than find a solution.”

Gene Collins is President of the Odessa NAACP and chairs the Texas State Conference NAACP’s Justice Committee

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⁴⁸ Griffey, E. (2021, February 02). Oil & Gas Companies Are Polluting Without Permits. *Spectrum News*. Retrieved from <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/san-antonio/news/2021/02/01/oil---gas-companies-are-polluting-without-permits->

Exaggerate the Level of Job Creation and Downplay the Lack of Quality and Safety in Jobs

A television commercial opens with a woman⁴⁹ proudly telling the American people that safe, secure natural gas is the connection between plentiful American jobs and a re-energized economy. This advertisement was part of a marketing campaign⁵⁰ promising a “manufacturing renaissance,” job opportunities, and clean air. The producer? No other than American Petroleum Institute (API).

Framing their polluting plants as job-creators, stimulators of the economy and community developers has allowed them to slide by regulations and acquire publicly funded subsidies. But we see that their promises do not align with reality.

The Ohio River Valley’s 2021 report⁵¹ on natural gas production documents a boom in production over the decade, while job growth and salaries remained stagnant. In the 22 Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia counties, which produce over 90% of natural gas for the region, jobs rose only 1.6%. Across the nation, fossil fuel industry growth was less than 1%⁵² due to the competition of clean energy technologies.



“We only give money to our friends and your folks went down and talked bad about coal to the EPA.”

CartoonStock.com

⁴⁹ Energy Tomorrow. (2013). *Connecting the dots*. [Television Commercial]. Retrieved from <https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7TAE/energy-tomorrow-connecting-the-dots>

⁵⁰ Energy Tomorrow. (2013). *Energy tomorrow tv commercials*. [Television Commercial]. Retrieved from <https://www.ispot.tv/brands/lq9/energy-tomorrow>

⁵¹ O’Leary, S. (2021, February 19). ORVI report – Appalachia’s natural gas counties: How dreams of jobs and prosperity turned into almost nothing. Retrieved from <https://ohiorivervalleyinstitute.org/fracking-counties-economic-impact-report/>

⁵² Scott, M. (2020, June 05). Pandemic accelerates decline and fall of fossil fuel producers. *Forbes Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/mikescott/2020/06/05/pandemic-accelerates-decline-and-fall-of-fossil-fuel-producers/?sh=25b7de3cf639>



CartoonStock.com

In contrast, clean energy production, just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, had been one of the nation's fastest⁵³ growing industries. At the end of 2020,⁵⁴ more than 3.3 million Americans that worked in clean energy jobs were offered higher hourly wages than the national average. The clean energy workforce was nearly three times the number of the fossil fuel workforce. Observed market growth and environmental initiatives by the Biden administration, positions the clean energy industry to rebuild the post-pandemic American economy.

Meanwhile, the oil and gas industry admitted that it is one of the most dangerous work sectors. From 2013-14, fatal injuries within the industry increased by 27 percent with 142

fatal injuries, nearly 16 deaths per 100,000 workers.⁵⁵ According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, since 1968, 76,000 coal miners have died of black lung disease.^{56,57} Still, fossil fuel conglomerates continue to invest in growth measures and infrastructure.

Co-opt Community Leaders and Organizations and Misrepresent the Interests and Opinions of Communities

Co-opting can be used as a tactic to neutralize or weaken public opposition. It creates deceptive alliances with local churches, non-profit organizations, and other groups by offering financial support⁵⁸ in the form of charitable contributions, gifts, and endowments. Fossil fuel companies have targeted some NAACP branches with this tactic.

CO-OPT: TAKE OVER, APPROPRIATE (Merriam Webster Online)

⁵³ Snieckus, D. (2021, January 13). Anaemic: Over 400,000 us clean energy jobs lost since outbreak of covid-19. Retrieved from <https://www.rechargenews.com/transition/anaemic-over-400-000-us-clean-energy-jobs-lost-since-outbreak-of-covid-19/2-1-943841>

⁵⁴ Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2). (2020 October). Clean jobs, better jobs: An examination of clean energy jobs and wages. Retrieved from <https://e2.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Clean-Jobs-Better-Jobs.-October-2020.-E2-ACORE-CELI.pdf>

⁵⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017). *National census of fatal occupational illnesses*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cfoi.pdf>

⁵⁶ Department of Labor. (2014). MSHA issues final rule on lowering coal miners' exposure to respirable coal dust. Retrieved from <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/msha/msha20140669>

⁵⁷ Berkes, H., Jingnan, H., and Benincasa, R. (2018, December 18). . An epidemic is killing thousands of coal miners. regulators could have stopped it. WAMU. Retrieved from <https://wamu.org/story/18/12/18/an-epidemic-is-killing-thousands-of-coal-miners-regulators-could-have-stopped-it/>



“I felt that if we wanted the money, we had to do it.”

President Adora Nweze, NAACP Florida State Conference, on accepting funding from Florida Power & Light⁵⁸

For many years, the St. Louis, Missouri NAACP Branch accepted financial support from Peabody Coal without any strings attached, or so they thought. When the branch did not receive a response from Peabody Coal

to their Freedom Fund Banquet fundraiser, the NAACP branch president did a routine follow up. Peabody Coal retorted, ‘We only give money to our friends and your folks went down and talked bad about coal to the EPA.’ There it was – the hidden agenda.

A spinoff of this corrupted co-opting tactic is the misrepresentation of information to the public. An energy company lobbying to build a gas compressor station in a historically black community in Union Hill in Virginia, Dominion, committed \$5 million to expand emergency services and build a new community center. The NAACP Virginia State Conference wrote a letter to call out the company for doing the very least under the circumstances. The letter was misrepresented as an affirmation of the gas compressor station. The VA NAACP filed a claim with the VA Air Pollution Control Board, to reassert their opposition.⁵⁹



“I’d like to be straightforward about all this, but, of course, that’s out of the question.”

CartoonStock.com

⁵⁸ Penn, I. (2020, January 05). N.A.A.C.P. tells local chapters: Don’t let energy industry manipulate you. *New York Times Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/05/business/energy-environment/naacp-utility-donations.html>

⁵⁹ Virginia NAACP files powerful comments on Dominion’s proposed Union Hill compressor station. (2019, January 5). *Blue Virginia*. Retrieved from <https://bluevirginia.us/2019/01/virginia-naacp-files-powerful-comments-on-dominions-proposed-union-hill-compressor-station>



"Remember when I said I was going to be honest with you, Jeff? That was a big, fat lie."

CartoonStock.com

Another ugly head of co-opting is the establishment of shell organizations with faces and voices of target communities to pedal messaging. The tactic, also known as “astroturfing,”⁶⁰ creates a false impression that there is community support, or grassroots action for change. Often, such policy-based campaigns are financed with the intent to misinform and manipulate voters.

SoCalGas has started a non-profit, California for Balanced Energy Solutions⁶¹ to challenge policy initiatives such as the city of San Luis Obispo’s “Clean Energy Choice for New Buildings”⁶². The latter aims

to discourage natural gas installations in new buildings and incentivize all-electric, energy-efficient installations. SoCalGas’ non-profit uses fear rhetoric against “intrusive government interventions” that threaten resident’s freedom of choice. During a council vote in March 2020, the board president of California for Balanced Energy Solutions – who is also the union president for SoCalGas – refused to follow social distancing policies and threatened to bus in protesters during COVID-19 national shutdown orders.⁶³

SoCalGas took their astroturfing strategy even further by using a third-party firm⁶³ to spread rumors that Clean Energy Choice hurt Black and Brown residents. The firm falsely claimed that the mayor was “getting a lot of heat” from “local Latino groups and the NAACP.” The San Luis Obispo branch president of the NAACP, Stephen Vines, was quick to



⁶⁰ Bienkov, A. (2012, February 8). Astroturfing: What is it and why does it matter? Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/feb/08/what-is-astroturfing>

⁶¹ Californians for Balanced energy solutions. (2019). Retrieved from <https://c4bes.org/>

⁶² Office of Sustainability. (2021). Clean energy choice for new buildings. City of San Luis Obispo. Retrieved from <https://www.slocity.org/government/department-directory/city-administration/office-of-sustainability/climate-action/carbon-neutral-buildings#:~:text=The%20proposed%20Clean%20Energy%20Choice,to%20the%20California%20Energy%20Code.>

⁶³ Atkin, E. (2020, July 03). The quiet campaign to make clean energy racist. Retrieved from <https://heated.world/p/the-quiet-campaign-to-make-clean>

denounce the rumors, reminding the public “We’re the ones who breathe this air. We are the ones dying.”

“

Take Pacoima Beautiful, which fights for cleaner air in the mostly Latino, low-income northeast San Fernando Valley. Between 2014 and 2018, the environmental justice group took \$107,750 from Sempra subsidiary SoCalGas.

In August 2016, Pacoima Beautiful’s executive director, Veronica Padilla, wrote a [letter](#) to state officials in support of reopening the gas company’s Aliso Canyon storage facility, which a year earlier had sprung the [worst methane leak in U.S. history](#).

Padilla now says she was reluctantly doing the company’s bidding. Eventually her group stopped accepting SoCalGas funding, and today it’s pushing Los Angeles officials to shut down a gas plant whose fuel is supplied by SoCalGas. The city-owned plant recently [leaked methane for at least three years](#), raising concerns about potential health effects to nearby residents.

‘Other environmental justice groups continue to take the [gas company] money and say, ‘Let’s do something good with their money.’ But I think it’s important for us to take a stand and just say no,’ Padilla said.

”

- [Los Angeles Times](#)

We must be alert to the astroturfing strategy veiled under harmless sounding entities such as “California for Balanced Energy Solutions” and “Consumers for Smart Solar.” These “shells” feed false narratives and campaigns to consumers. The fossil fuel business model relies on customers’ dependency on the product and maximizing profit at the expense of the long-term community sustainability and wellbeing.

Praise False Solutions While Claiming that Real Solutions are Impractical, Impossible, or Harmful for BIPOC and Poor Communities



"THERE! ANOTHER BATCH OF CLEAN COAL."

CartoonStock.com



"I had a nightmare that oil and gas had become alternative energy sources."

CartoonStock.com

"I just left Montana, and I looked at those trains and they're loaded up with clean coal — beautiful clean coal."

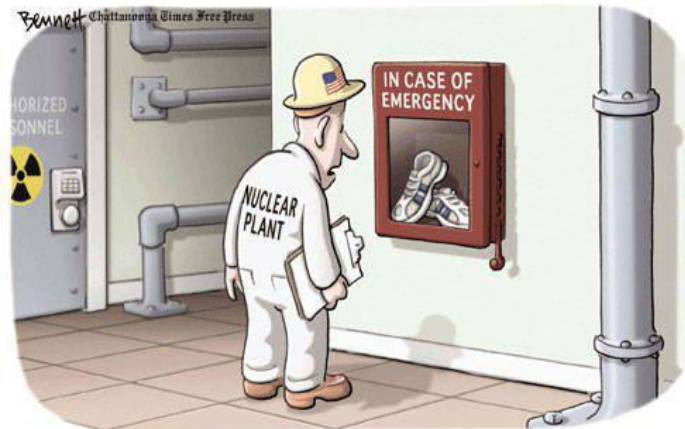
~former President Donald Trump

Fossil fuel companies will often deceptively present themselves as *eco-friendly* by making commitments to energy efficiency and "clean" energy production. This tactic promotes a misperception that these companies can mitigate the environmental and social damage. It also fabricates trust with consumers and discredits renewable resource and energy options. Fossil fuel companies will often try to undermine renewable energy viability with skewed data or misleading messaging.



"Yes, the planet got destroyed. But for a beautiful moment in time we created a lot of value for shareholders."

CartoonStock.com



'Running shoes?'

"Affordability" tactics target low-income communities, warning against disenfranchisement in the clean energy transition. Northwest Natural Gas's renewable natural gas (RNG), uses "affordability" as a selling point. However, it turns out to be more expensive than other energy resources.⁶⁴

A 2017 climate primer⁶⁵ produced by the American Petroleum Institute (API) touted the benefits of natural gas and oil – for its affordability and economic sustainability. The primer suggested that using natural gas is responsible for helping to drive down CO₂ emissions and making the U.S. "second to none" in countries reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Environmental Energy Study Institute⁶⁶ in 2018 reported that the U.S. accounts for only five percent of the global population yet is responsible for 30% of global energy use and 28% of carbon emissions. Electricity industries count for about 29% of the greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere.

Natural gas creates more planet-warming emissions much faster than coal.⁶⁷ Natural gas companies have nevertheless marketed their product as "cleaner than coal and will only get cleaner." Through all the misinformation and marketing campaigns, we see and we have experienced the toxic pollution harming tribal groups, communities of color, and low-income communities, and our earth.

“

We advocate for the issues that affect us. [...] we don't believe that the research is there to say it's an effective method. [...] So it's a **waste of resources** to do carbon capture while we allow polluters to keep polluting.

”

- James Dillon, NAACP member

⁶⁴ Feinstein, L. (2021, March 9). The four fatal flaws of renewable natural gas. Sightline Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.sightline.org/2021/03/09/the-four-fatal-flaws-of-renewable-natural-gas/>

⁶⁵ American Petroleum Institute. (2017, May). *Climate change and energy*. Retrieved from <https://www.api.org/-/media/Files/Policy/Environment/Climate-Change-and-Energy/CLIMATE-PRIMER.pdf>

⁶⁶ Environmental and Energy Study Institute. (2018, May 27). *U.S. leads in greenhouse gas reductions, but some states are falling behind*. Retrieved from <https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/u.s.-leads-in-greenhouse-gas-reductions-but-some-states-are-falling-behind>

⁶⁷ Roth, S. (2020, Nov 30). A 'gaslight' campaign for fossil fuels. *Los Angeles Times Online*. Retrieved from https://enewspaper.latimes.com/infinity/article_share.aspx?guid=4087eace-619e-4b0b-871f-9145d61250a7

“Embrace” Renewables to Control the New Energy Economy

Fossil fuel companies will publicly assume interest in sustainable solutions and privately fight for regulation to maintain their monopoly on the energy economy.

Florida Power and Light (FPL), one of the largest utility providers in the country, created the Sunshine Energy Program in 2004. Four years later, Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) shut it down for mismanagement of funds. Over 38,000 customers had contributed to renewable energy development projects, of which, only 20% was actually used for the cause.

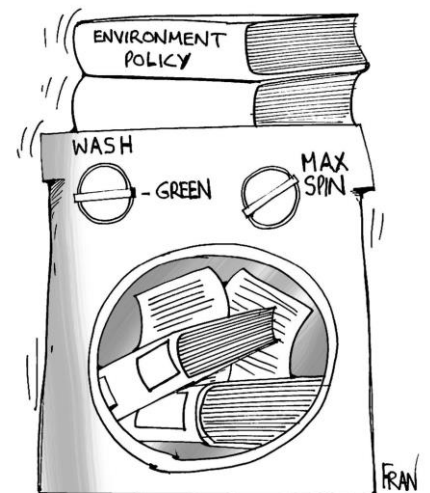


In 2014, FPL resurrected a “community-based” solar energy program, accepting donations for their solar project. Simultaneously, FPL filed a petition requesting that the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) discontinue its solar rebate program that started 3 years earlier.

In 2020, masked as SolarTogether, FPL campaigned for customers to pay extra on their electric bills, promising the proceeds would finance a solar project and that they will be paid backed in 7 years. FPL has “dressed in new clothes” the same renewable energy program funded by customer-based donations since 1998.

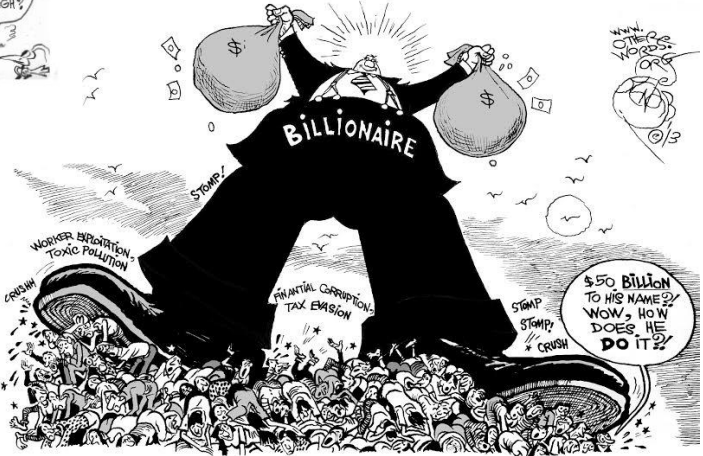
FPL partnered with utility giant Duke Energy against the 2020 ballot initiative, “Right to Competitive Energy Market for Customers of Investor-Owned Utilities; Allowing Energy Choice. The initiative promised customers the right to choose from a series of energy options from a competitive market. The utility giants used “affordability” rhetoric to crush the initiative warning that rates will go up if it passed. Winning the public’s confidence, the initiative was voted out and they maintained stronghold of the energy sector.

Big utility companies green wash their product as “renewable natural gas” that is more affordable and emits less greenhouse gases.⁶⁸ RNG is methane gas, which is chemically identical to fossil fuel gas, and just as harmful.⁶⁴



⁶⁸ Roberts, D. (2020, February 20). The false promise of ‘renewable natural gas.’ *Vox Online* Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2020/2/14/21131109/california-natural-gas-renewable-socialgas>

The Real Facts about the Imperative to Transition to a New Energy Economy



Fossil Fuel Emissions Kill – Disproportionately Killing Residents of BIPOC and Low-Income Communities

Approximately 63,000 Americans are killed each year by air pollution. In the U.S. an estimated \$600 billion per year in 2050 will amount to the “total social cost due to air pollution mortality, morbidity, lost productivity, and visibility degradation.”⁶⁹ These Americans are disproportionately BIPOC and low-income community residents.

A report published by the Union of Concerned Scientists, outlined that approximately 40% of communities of color and low-income communities live within three miles of power plants that emit particulate matter that harmfully taints air quality.⁷⁰ Energy companies are not legally held accountable to compensate the damages they cause, instead these costs are absorbed by medical patients, their families, and taxpayers.

The National Research Council reports that air pollution from U.S. coal-fired power plants alone causes approximately 1,530 preventable deaths each year. They also cause \$62 billion in total damages per year for people exposed to the toxins emitted by the extraction and use of coal.⁷¹ As our *Coal Blooded* report states: African Americans are more likely to live near coal-fired power plants; African American children are 2-3 times likely to die of an asthma attack; and African American men are more likely to die from lung disease while less likely to smoke.

According to a recent report from the Union of Concerned Scientists, approximately “one in five uranium mines is located within six miles of tribal lands” across the western United States.⁷⁰ Abandoned hard rock mines expose Indigenous communities to chemical pollutions and toxins, increasing their risk of developing kidney disease and hypertension.



Defiant Dakota Access Pipeline water protectors faced-off with various law enforcement agencies on Feb. 22, 2017, the day the camp was slated to be raided.



⁶⁹ Jacobson, M.Z., Delucchi, M.A., Bazouin, G., Bauer, Z.A.F., Heavey, C.C., Fisher, E., Morris, S., Piekutowski, D. J.Y., Vencilla, T., and Yeskoo, T.W. (2015). 100% clean and renewable wind, water, and sunlight (WWS) all-sector energy roadmaps for the 50 Unites States. *Energy and Environmental Science*. Retrieved from <http://web.stanford.edu/group/efmh/jacobson/Articles//USStatesWWS.pdf>

⁷⁰ Union of Concerned Scientists. (2019 October). *Abandoned science, broken promises*. Center for Science and Democracy. Retrieved from <https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/abandoned-science-broken-promises-web-final.pdf>

⁷¹ Environmental and Climate Justice Program. (2004). *Coal blooded report*. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Retrieved from http://action.naacp.org/page/-/Climate/Coal_Blooded_Executive_Summary_Update.pdf

“

But La'Tonya Troutman with the LaPorte County branch of the NAACP, says low-income and minority groups that live near these coal plants are often neglected.

'We can't overlook these communities and their needs as well just for the sake of others, when **we are the ones breathing it in,**' Troutman says.

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- [NPR](#)



Fossil Fuel Pollution Affects Communities Differently: BIPOC Communities Carry Burdens &



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The Rev. Corine Mack, president of the [Charlotte-Mecklenburg County] NAACP branch, agrees.

'It's very easy to implement anything in the black community because most of the time black people won't say anything because they don't know,' she said. 'This is why it's important to educate people, so they know the harm that's being done.'

Mack also expressed how unlikely it is to see racial injustice perpetrated upon upper class neighborhoods.

'You can't go into Myers Park and do this or Ballantyne because you know they won't allow it,' she said. 'Many times, because we are ignorant to what's going on, they get away with murder. **People are dying and don't know why they're dying.**'

”

- [The Charlotte Post](#)

Harms, with Few Economic Benefits

In 1969, the oil-drenched Cuyahoga River in Cleveland caught fire. The fire alerted the nation to the pollutant-filled river that housed years of industrial waste and sludge from nearby plants and manufacturing facilities. Although 1969 was the year the fire caught national attention, it was hardly the first time the waterway burned. Prior to 1969, the Cuyahoga River caught fire a series of times over the years. It was reported that everyone knew the oil slicks suffocated and polluted the river. Yet, for many, pollution meant that industries thrived and “everyone had jobs.”⁷⁴



Former U.S. President Donald Trump prepares to cut a red ribbon between two stacks of paper, representing the regulatory code from 1960 compared to present day, during an event at the White House on Dec. 14, 2017.

As a dominating industry, fossil fuel companies often rely on their “close friends” to protect their and maximize their business operations. Trump’s close ties to oil, gas, and coal companies prompted the administration’s swift response for industry tax cuts and aggressive environmental regulation rollbacks that favored fossil fuel production.⁷⁵ With increased deregulation, already-polluting facilities could pollute more with lifted bans and weakened restrictions. Even in the midst of a pandemic, Trump, in mid-July 2020, declared policy changes that would help to “speed up” reviews for large pipeline and infrastructure projects.⁷⁶ Trump also sought out ways to prioritize financial relief to fossil fuel companies struggling with pandemic-related financial stressors. While touted as an industry who “remembers its friends,”⁷⁶ the friend-base for many fossil fuel moguls is strategically limited to those with power. It is not with its workers, or the outside community. While, for years, research has shown that exposure to toxic air from fossil fuel emissions can make individuals chronically ill, fossil fuel companies think of their pandemic-relief bailouts instead of the health of its workers or the outside community. At the time of this release, the pandemic continues and more studies are emerging that link high pollution areas with increased rates of COVID-19 cases. A

⁷⁴ Boissoneault, L. (2019, June 19). The Cuyahoga river caught fire at least a dozen times, but no one cared until 1969. *Smithsonian Magazine Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/cuyahoga-river-caught-fire-least-dozen-times-no-one-cared-until-1969-180972444/>

⁷⁵ Riordan, L. & Lehen, A. (2020, April 7th). Trump administration relaxes regulations to fight coronavirus and also loosen environmental rules. *NBC News Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-admin-relaxes-regulations-fight-coronavirus-also-loosens-environmental-rules-n1177761>

⁷⁶ Stone, P. (2020, August 9). Big oil remembers ‘friend’ Trump with millions in campaign funds. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/aug/09/big-oil-trump-campaign-donations-fossil-fuel-industry>

recent Harvard study has highlighted that individuals living in the area of high-particulate pollution are actually 8% more likely to die from COVID than others living in areas with less pollution⁷⁷. Whether COVID or other illnesses, we can predict who will struggle with the adverse and fatal effects of illness by highlighting areas within proximity of environmental pollution.

While many may live with the dangers and toxins of polluting facilities because it may keep the economy thriving and provide jobs, burdens, not rewards, are often experienced by the surrounding fenceline communities. For communities struggling with limited employment opportunities and/or economic fluctuations, stable paychecks and health insurance are lifelines. While oil, gas, and energy facilities may provide jobs, those jobs aren't going to people of color. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS),⁷⁸ in 2020, in the fields of mining, quarrying, and oil & gas extraction reported approximately 87% of the workforce identify as white, 17% of the workforce identify as Hispanic or Latino, 4.6% of the workforce identify as Black or African American, and 4% of the workforce identify as Asian. Further, just over 14% of the workforce identify as women. A similar story is also found in the utility fields, BLS reports approximately 85% of the workforce identify as white and 21% of the workforce identify as women.

Racialized patterns of disenfranchisement through fossil fuel industry placement, lack of employment opportunities, and depreciating housing values have created an opportunity for fossil fuel companies to extract more from the community than what they say they return

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Choke holds are not always done physically with hands or knees. Environmental racism chokeholds occur when toxic waste sites and power plants are disproportionately sited in Black and brown communities.

Environmental racism is particularly insidious because it often seems mundane — it is hidden away in government siting and permitting decisions, or the lack of representation as governments make decisions about who will bear the brunt of pollution.

Lawyers, judges, and governmental agencies chokehold our hope of equality when environmental regulations and statutes are not upheld and equally enforced, only protecting White and wealthy communities.

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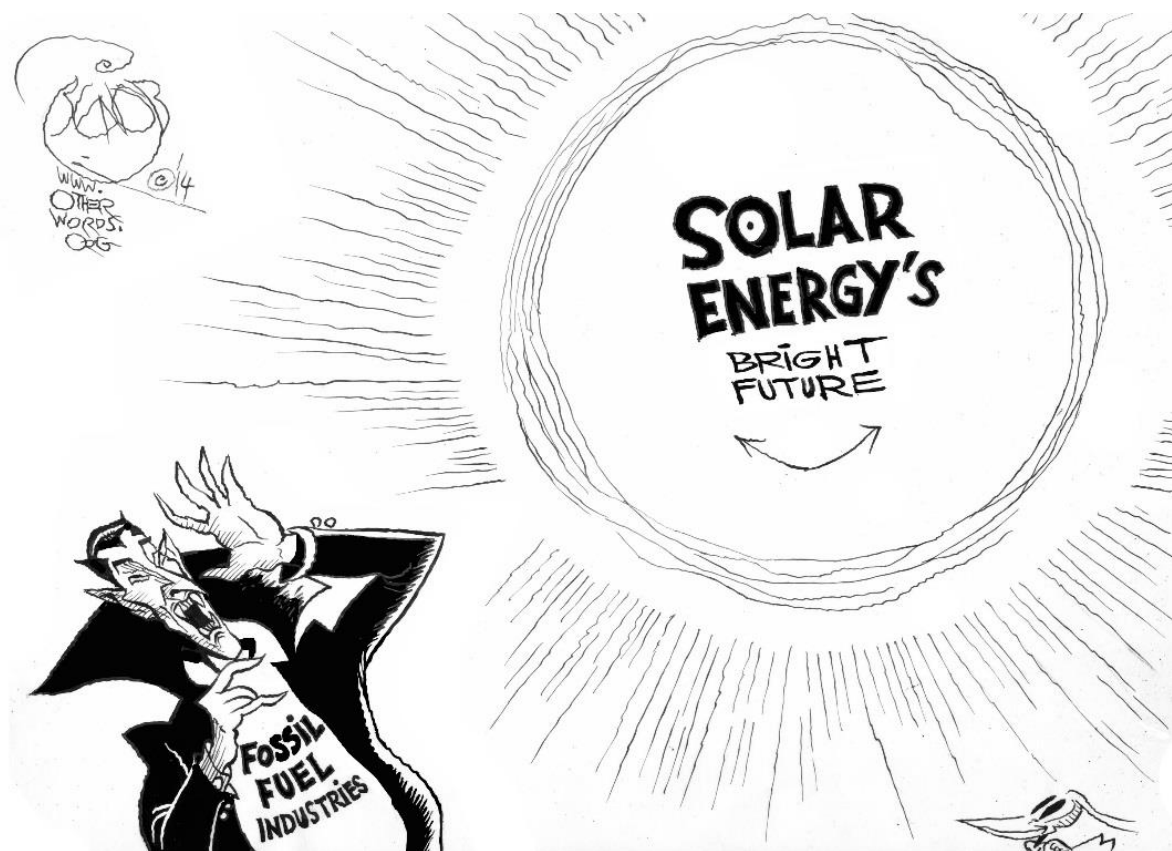
- Mary Ashanti, resident of Salisbury & president of the Wicomico County Chapter NAACP
[Capital Gazette](#)

⁷⁷ Costello, P. (2020, July 17). *Why air pollution is linked to severe cases of COVID-19* [Blog Post]. SCOPE. Stanford Medicine. Retrieved from <https://scopeblog.stanford.edu/2020/07/17/why-air-pollution-is-linked-to-severe-cases-of-covid-19/>

⁷⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021, January 22). *Labor force statistics from the current population survey*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat18.htm>

Clean Energy *Can* Power Our Nation

Over 95% of the energy needed in the U.S. can be produced with solar and wind technology, with the remaining 5% produced with geothermal, wave, tidal, and hydroelectric systems. The energy produced with these clean and renewable systems would be more affordable than fossil fuel energy for a few reasons: 1) Energy produced by the fossil fuel industry becomes more expensive over time, as costs increase for mining, transporting, and processing fuels, not even including the social, health and other costs. 2) Clean and renewable energy systems have zero fuel costs; 3) The cost of operating clean and renewable systems would decrease over time as technological improvements are made, and as manufacturing and project deployment becomes less expensive due to increased economies of scale or production.⁶⁹



Clean Energy Makes Sense: Health, Economic, and Environmental Benefits

Converting the U.S. to 100% clean energy by 2050 would: 1) Prevent the deaths of approximately 63,000 Americans who are killed by air pollution each year and prevent \$600 billion per year in related damages; 2) Eliminate the U.S.'s production of greenhouse gases, which is projected to cause \$3.3 trillion per year in damage associated with climate change by 2050; and 3) Create a total of 6 million jobs lasting 40 years, which is greater than the 4 million jobs currently created by the fossil fuel industry.⁷⁹



In a report⁸⁰ produced by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) on power generation costs in 2019, replacing 500 gigawatts of existing coal plants (with the highest operating costs) with solar and onshore wind power could cut annual system costs up to \$23 billion per year while reducing CO₂ emissions. Further, electricity costs from renewables has fallen significantly due to the increase in product performance technologies as well as economies of scale. Additionally, it was noted that in 2019 “56% of all newly commissioned utility-scale renewable power generation capacity provided electricity at a lower cost than the cheapest fossil fuel-fired option.” Further, the World Resource Institute⁸¹ reports, that solar and wind energy resources provide the “cheapest power for 67% of the world.”

It seems that the only factor hurt by the shift to renewable energies is the fossil fuel industry’s bottom line. Due to tactics that keep them in power, fossil fuel industries return enormous profits, reporting \$331 billion in profits annually and awarding large compensation packages to their executives. In 2017,⁸² CEOs of coal-producing Peabody Energy Corp., and natural

⁷⁹ Bjorn Carey, “Stanford engineers develop state-by-state plan to convert U.S. to 100% clean, renewable energy by 2050,” *Stanford News Service*, 2015, <http://news.stanford.edu/pr/2015/pr-50states-renewable-energy-060815.html>.

⁸⁰ IRENA. (2020). *Renewable power generation costs in 2019*. Retrieved from https://www.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2020/Jun/IRENA_Power_Generation_Costs_2019.pdf

⁸¹ Tierney, S. (2020, May 12). *Setting the record straight about renewable energy*. World Resources Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.wri.org/blog/2020/05/setting-record-straight-about-renewable-energy>

⁸² Javaid, S., & Good, A. (2018, July 26). *Highest-paid oil, gas, coal CEOs saw compensation spike in 2017*. Retrieved from <https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/trending/aoiipajpkieiqpmdrqsgq2>

gas company Ultra Petroleum Corp. moved their companies out of bankruptcy to rake in over \$20 million in compensation.

The New Energy Economy Creates Better, Safer Jobs with Less Investment

In September 2020, IRENA reported that renewable energy jobs continued to grow to 11.5 million⁸³ worldwide. A surplus of jobs created across renewable energy

technologies was also reported by the International Labour Organization (ILO) who noted this increase had a positive effect⁸⁴ in increasing the quality of jobs when compared “traditional” energy sectors. In August 2020, the Pennsylvania Clean Energy Employment Report⁸⁵ noted that from 2017 to 2019, clean energy jobs were among the “fastest growing” jobs in the Rust Belt state and job creation continues to rise. This is in direct contrast to previous claims by the fossil fuel industry that job creation in renewable energy fields will be slow to actualize.



The truth is that we can create safe, permanent jobs that pay well and do not harm people or the environment. We can do this by reversing the grip the fossil fuel industry has on the power grid and evolving toward locally-owned clean and renewable energy systems.

⁸³ IRENA. (2020). *Renewable energy jobs continue growth to 11.5 million worldwide*. Retrieved from <https://www.irena.org/newsroom/pressreleases/2020/Sep/Renewable-Energy-Jobs-Continue-Growth-to-11-5-Million-Worldwide>

⁸⁴ International Labor Organization. (n.d.). *Green jobs and renewable energy: Low carbon, high employment*. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_250690.pdf

⁸⁵ Pennsylvania Energy Office. *2020 Pennsylvania clean energy industry report*. Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Energy Programs Office. Retrieved from <https://files.dep.state.pa.us/Energy/Office%20of%20Energy%20and%20Technology/OETDPortalFiles/2020EnergyReport/2020PACEIR.pdf>

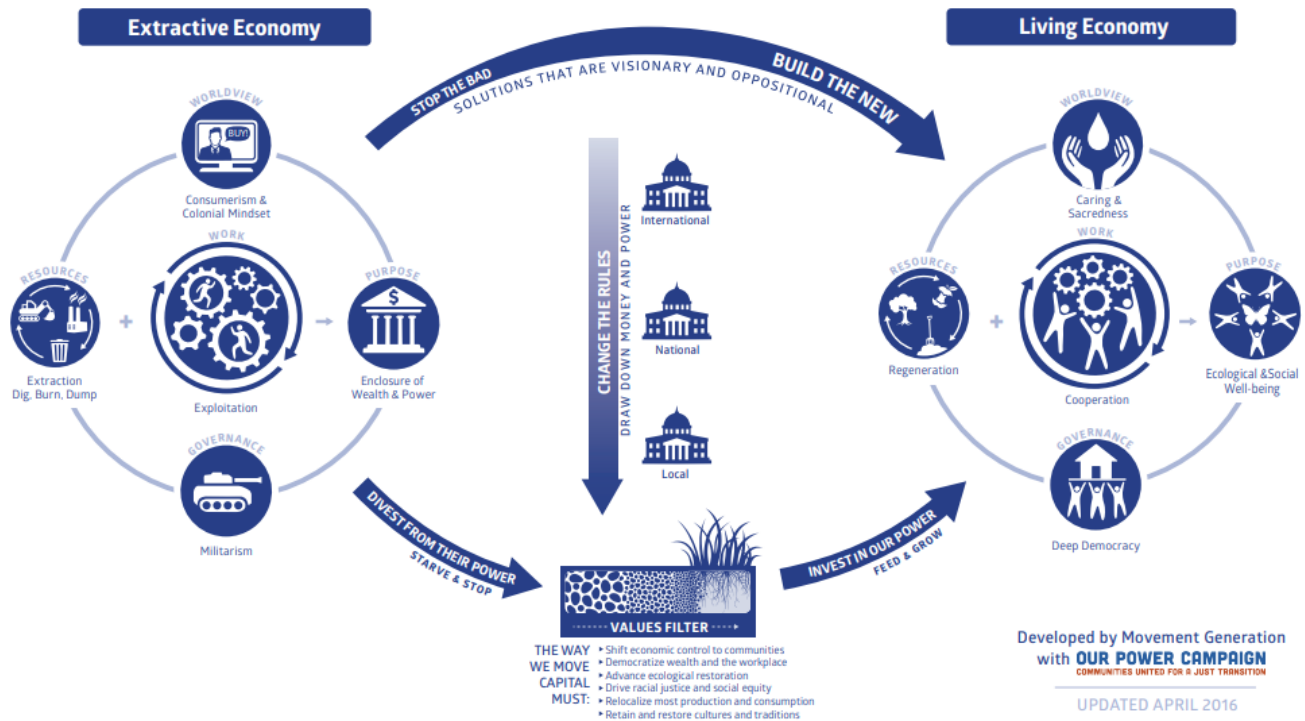
Supporting a systems-approach to workforce development, clean energy jobs are distributed across work sectors, including manufacturing, construction, wholesale trade, and professional services.⁸⁴ Unlike fossil fuel industry jobs, they are decentralized and make employment opportunities more accessible to workers across the country while offering better wages. *The Clean Jobs, Better Jobs* reports:

- the median hourly wages for clean energy jobs are about 25% higher than the national median wage, especially when it comes to entry-level wages;
- clean energy jobs are more likely to come with health care and retirement than jobs across the rest of the private sector; and,
- with the support of federal policy and economic recovery efforts, investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and grid modernization sectors of the clean energy industry could create 860,300 full-time, direct, indirect, and induced jobs.

As part of President Biden’s *Build Back Better* recovery plan, clean energy is an investment the nation is already making. Further, investment in the green energy transition has the potential to create \$26 trillion in benefits across the global economy by 2030⁸⁶.

Transitioning to a New Energy Economy is the Only Real Solution

A STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR JUST TRANSITION



⁸⁶ Sigalos, M. (2020, Nov. 10). Biden’s economic recovery plan, called build back better, would spend over \$7.3 trillion and invest in green infrastructure, health care and more. *CNBC Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.com/2020/11/10/president-elect-joe-bidens-plan-for-the-economy-jobs-and-covid-19-htm>

We started this primer with a ticking climate clock and the limited time left to make purposeful, actionable change. The Earth is warming rapidly and the next steps we take must be not only strategic, but timely. In 2019, alone, the U.S. experienced 14 separate, billion-dollar weather and climate disasters, including: 3 major inland floods, 8 severe storms, 2 tropical cyclones, and 1 wildfire event. Since 2017, the U.S. has experienced “a dozen billion-dollar disasters” per year that have impacted communities⁸⁷.

Yet, we need not wait for the climate-related weather disasters to destroy communities. As this primer along with extensive research concludes, residents are sick and dying due to the toxins pumped into communities from the fossil fuel industry. As a result, the localized experiences of harm featured in this report serve to contextualize climate injustice at the intersections of race, class and place.

We have tried various fossil fuel pathways and have met a “dead end.” We have no choice but to try another approach. As a result, transitioning to a new energy economy is the only real solution to provide purposeful, actionable change to revive communities for thriving, sustainable futures.

“

This is a major win for Charles County, but the work is just beginning. With the closure of the Morgantown plant it is essential that we **continue to advocate with a holistic approach for a JUST Transition** which supports our workers, the Community and the County.

”

- Dyotha Sweat, President of Charles County NAACP
[Sierra Club](#)

"Observations throughout the world make it clear that climate change is occurring, and rigorous scientific research demonstrates that the greenhouse gases emitted by human activities are the primary driver."

~Statement on Climate Change from 18 Scientific Associations (2009)

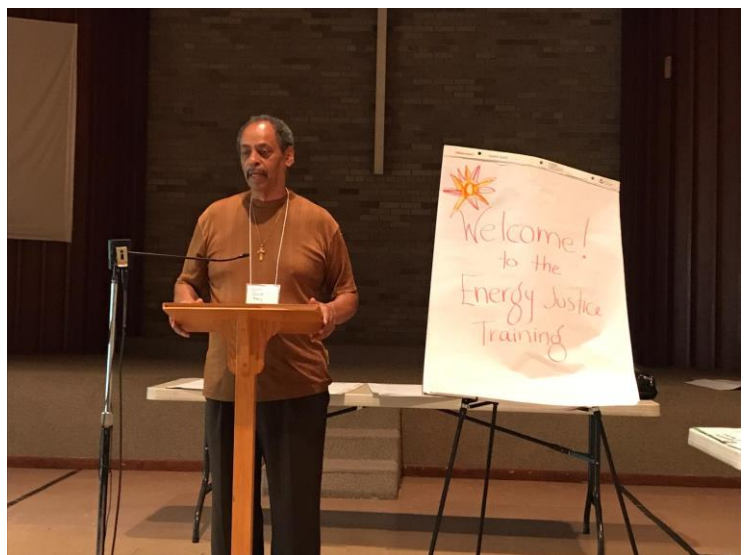
⁸⁷ Smith, A.B. (2020, January). 2010-2019: A landmark decade of U.S. billion-dollar weather and climate disasters. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Retrieved from <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2010-2019-landmark-decade-us-billion-dollar-weather-and-climate>

Climate Justice Advocacy: 10 Ways Communities Can Advance the Shift to Energy Efficiency and Renewable Resources

The following sections describe the ways in which communities can advance the importance of the climate crisis and the shift toward energy efficiency and renewable energies. It also highlights real-life stories and resources⁸⁸ to highlight what is possible when we take action.

Understanding that even the smallest change makes a big difference, the goal of the NAACP's Environmental and Climate Justice Program is to advance the leadership of frontline communities to eliminate climate injustices and ignite an environmental, social, and economic revolution. The following strategies will help us achieve this collective goal:

1. Leverage residents' solidarities within communities to ground resistance against climate injustices and fossil fuel manipulation
2. Shift the narrative towards justice: Renewable resources support equity and community resiliency
3. Seed Education in Communities for Sustainable Change: Public Learning Practices and Community-based Participatory Action Research
4. Expand Networks of Support at the Local, Regional, and National Level
5. Support and Advance Just and Equitable Policies
6. Participate in the Process
7. Direct Engagement
8. Take Legal Action
9. Reverse Citizens United
10. Support Campaign Finance Reform



⁸⁸ These stories and resources have been hyperlinked to the external sources for easy reference and access.

Leverage Residents' Solidarities within Communities to Ground Resistance Against Climate Injustices and Fossil Fuel Manipulation

"The advancement of the self, the liberation of the self is a meaningless concept, outside of the context of one's community."⁸⁹

~ Dr. Michael Dawson, Professor of Political Science

Dawson highlights that the racialized practices that have historically segregated Black communities have, also, been a faculty for establishing solidarity among residents within communities. Particularly within communities of color, social relations tend to establish a series of obligations and expectations, fostered by trust and care, in which individuals not only possess, but understand will be returned by other members in the community. Often, such communities that have experienced historical disinvestment and dispossession are described as “disadvantaged” or “at risk” for what is lacking in terms of economic wealth, education level, and social capital/social mobility, instead of recognized for fostering additional forms of wealth (familial, navigational, aspirational, etc.) that develop in spite of or in response to barriers in biased systems.⁹⁰



⁸⁹ Dawson, M. C. (2003). *Black Visions: The roots of contemporary African-American political ideologies*. United Kingdom: University of Chicago Press.

⁹⁰ Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 69-91.

Strong social bonds are a form of cultural wealth, along with language and histories of resistance, that highlight the community's collective, internal resilience as well as a source of compassion and care. These forms of cultural wealth are assets that can be leveraged for collective, group action. As changes to social conditions are typically achieved through collective efficacy and group action, we must situate the harms faced by BIPOC communities from climate injustices into place-based contexts. In this localized context, we can mobilize residents to understand the dangers and threats fossil fuels pose to communities in order to resist manipulation and move toward more sustainable solutions.

In June 2019, the NAACP released its *Our Communities, Our Power* toolkit that serves as a module-based, learning resource for communities to enact localized change in environmental policies and practices. Building practices within communities expands existing community assets (like solidarities) and repositions power to residents to voice more sustainable, nurturing solutions to overlapping inequities.



Shift the Narrative Towards Justice: Renewable Resources Support Equity and Community Resiliency

Our communities have been disproportionately disenfranchised by fossil fuel industries and other injustices, but we are not hopeless. Instead, we seek to leverage our social ties and attachments to our communities and places of residence in order to be heard, valued, and honored. The harms endured by BIPOC and low-income communities as a result of fossil fuel industry inequitable practices are racialized, abled, gendered, and classed.

The shift to renewable energy and resources not only makes sense to the broader economy, it eliminates the poisonous materials that pollute our communities and drastically reduces the effects of climate-related disasters that are experienced differently in areas. As a result, shifting this narrative towards justice provides an opportunity to change conversations toward equitable solutions that will allow us to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions for safer, more resilient communities.

In 2020, the U.S. reached the apex of civil unrest with rising unemployment and death rates from a pandemic flanked against protests challenging systemic racism. At its core, each issue provides the tinder that burns the Black community. In support of Black lives, communities across the U.S. took aim at the interlocking systems of power and privilege that sanction violence (racial, environmental, or otherwise) in neighborhoods. Understanding the importance of this precise moment for national action, the NAACP's Baton Rouge branch in Louisiana provided organizational support to the RISE St. James parish members in combating harmful

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Every constituency in Indiana appears to be against this bill except for the coal companies. It's a rare bill that seems to unite environmentalists, consumer advocates, utilities, the NAACP and the Chamber of Commerce.

”

- Ben Inskeep, Indiana-based senior analyst for EQ Research
[Inside Climate Action News](#)



environmental practices of the local Formosa petrochemical plant. With guidance from the NAACP, RISE increased its membership to include more local residents involved in creating change. The NAACP's collaboration with RISE undergirds the Black Lives Matter movement as a movement to secure justice, including environmental justice, for the health and wellbeing of Black people.



Seed Education in Communities for Sustainable Change: Public Learning Practices and Community-Based Participatory Action Research

"If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."
~Lilla Watson, Indigenous Australian visual artist



Addressing inequities across communities has often focused on “filling the gap” of need (i.e., building parks, cooling centers for extreme heat). While this is necessary, it is often insufficient on its own and may obscure addressing the root cause (i.e. affordable housing, socioeconomic status, infrastructure, food deserts, pollution). Engaging the community and increasing engagement across communities offers an opportunity to surface more meaningful interventions based on unique lived experiences. The process positions residents as experts and legitimizes their experiences for use in deriving equitable solutions.

As communities experience climate-related effects and pollution differently, it is necessary to seed solutions within communities. As such public learning practices and community-based participatory action research projects provide pathways for residents to engage with the issue as it relates to their community in order to deepen understanding. In a community-based action



research project, the NAACP partnered with the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization and the Harvard School of Public Health on a study that exposed 40 asthma-related deaths, 550 ER visits, and 2800 asthma attacks per year, were attributed to the Fisk and Crawford Coal Fired Power Plants. These findings documented in the Coal Blooded Report were instrumental in educating and mobilizing communities and resulted in the closure of the Fisk and Crawford power plants.



Work-based learning opportunities, or apprenticeships, provide a bridge for many individuals to develop portable skills and experience in order to transition, fully, into workplaces. By situating learning within the work contexts, individuals are afforded unique experiences through hands-on practice in solving real-life problems. Such opportunities often benefit communities by building stronger, inclusive economies for shared growth. Seeing an opportunity to seed learning in communities and spread knowledge about the benefits of solar energy, Indiana's NAACP chapter launched a solar job training program in Evansville. The initiative not only provides solar installation training to a range of interested residents, but it also provides an opportunity for local businesses to take advantage of solar energy alternatives, reducing their energy costs in order to redistribute energy savings into community programs. It is a cycle of reciprocated benefit.

With collaborative practices, public learning practices and community research projects also provide residents with an opportunity to develop wide-ranging skillsets. When understood within place-based contexts, residents have the potential to co-design solutions that directly address the issue and the community's needs for long-term betterment and sustainable change.

NAACP SOLAR EQUITY INITIATIVE PRESENTS VIRTUAL, ONLINE & HANDS ON JOB TRAINING

EVANSVILLE VICINITY NAACP AND INDIANA STATE CONFERENCE OF THE NAACP

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CONTACT: EVANSVILLE NAACP PRESIDENT ARNOLD 812-573-1169

OR DENISE ABDUL RAHMAN LIVING OUTSIDE OF EVANSVILLE 443-915-2533 #THISISUS #JUSTTRANSITION



Expand Networks of Support at the Local, Regional, and National Level



The social practices that evolve as individuals within local communities collaborate on areas of interest have the potential to grow, gaining regional and national support networks. Such strategies not only increase knowledge on the dangers of fossil fuel extraction practices, but has the potential to shift power to effectuate greater change in adopting greener, renewable practices.

In southwest Memphis, Tennessee, community residents have banded together to capture local, regional, and national attention in opposition to the construction of the Byhalia crude pipeline. The proposed route for the pipeline would run approximately 49 miles from Memphis to Marshall County, Mississippi – slicing through an all-Black, residential community that already experiences higher air toxins from the nearby Valero oil refinery. While the shortest distance between two points is





a straight line, Byhalia’s construction route curves, extending the distance to prevent cutting through an all-white, affluent Tennessee community. As a result, the selective route increases the pollution burden for the Black community with high rates of homeownership. Taking on the fight against Big Oil is not an easy battle, but the community has accepted the challenge – amplifying their voices to raise nationwide awareness for a cleaner, healthier environment.

At the height of the well-funded attacks against distributed generation of

electricity, the Climate Justice Alliance (CJA) assembled a working group that included the NAACP to collectively develop a Net-Metering Toolkit. The toolkit served as a primer for consumers and advocates, who, in turn, could educate their elected officials and others on this policy. As a result of expanded networks of support, information can be developed to reach many audiences to accelerate the cause of eliminating climate injustices and moving towards a clean energy economy.

Support and Advance Just and Equitable Policies

“

...The Mims House is the regional branch office of the NAACP, which is working to convert the building into a solar installation project. ‘There aren’t a whole lot of examples of that in Eugene right now,’ said Aimee Okotie-Oyekan, the NAACP Eugene/Springfield branch’s environmental and climate justice coordinator. The branch is doing this through a grant program with Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) that allows customers to designate a small portion of their utility payment to support the solar installation. Aligning with the national NAACP’s Solar Equity Initiative, the branch aims to conduct a demonstration so that the community can learn about clean energy. The NAACP is also a part of a new campaign, Fossil Free Eugene, a coalition of environmental organizations including Beyond Toxics, Sunrise Eugene, 350 Eugene and Cascadia.

”

- [INWV](#)

To begin changes we want to see in the world, we have to start with our own practices. As such, supporting and advancing just and equitable goals (through policies, procedures, systems) to address the climate crisis will not only support more equitable environmental and

economic goals, but will also improve public health and wellbeing goals within communities. Advocating for and committing to net metering policies, energy efficiency resource standards, renewable portfolio standards, consumer choice, community solar, and equitable hiring practices begin to chip away at the historical inequities embedded within our systems.

A critical component of the new energy economy is policymaking that supports collectivism and cooperative economics. In Maryland, a coalition of groups, including the Maryland State Conference of the NAACP educated themselves, the public, and their elected officials on the benefits of Community Solar. This resulted in success in the approval of the Community Solar Pilot Program, by the Maryland Public Service Commission.

In Indiana, the NAACP chapter continues to fight against policies that restrict net metering. Legislative policies, such as HB309, that phase-out net metering have harmful outcomes on low-income communities and communities of color as the rate of return diminishes after a short period of time. To increase access for residents who may not be aware of the limited timeframe, the chapter has collaborated with the city of Indianapolis to help low-income families obtain rooftop solar panels. Additionally, the chapter is exploring initiatives that that will increase accessibility of solar alternatives by low-income and BIPOC residents without subscription fees.

In 2020, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing on pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic in which contributors highlighted the disproportionate effects both environmental threats and health threats facing Black and Brown communities. Research presented at the hearing focused on the link between COVID-19 deaths and environmental pollution and, in particular, air quality and pollution. Witnesses included leadership from Environmental Justice, Climate,



The closing of Chalk Point demonstrates the collective power of a community united. Many voices, including those of the NAACP, and other activists, were unified in demanding ‘a better way’ to deliver clean energy to the State of Maryland. The NAACP Maryland State Conference, is working with industry and political leaders to take this monumental win to the next level. Our efforts to transition to renewable energy will continue as we launch our Maryland Solar Equity Initiative 2020. We hope Marylanders will support us as we partner with civic, corporate and the legislature to provide job training and placement, homeowner education, and legislative guidance to spread the good word about renewable energy. These plant closings validate our efforts and inspire us to continue doing what we do.



- Willie Flowers, President, NAACP Maryland State Conference

[Bay Net](#)

and Community Revitalization National Advocacy Center at the National Wildlife Federation, the NAACP, and the Opportunity Funds Association that urged commission members for more just policies to support an equitable and safe environment for all U.S. residents.



Participate in the Process

To increase diverse perspectives on issues, attend local Zoning Board Meetings, Public Service Commission Meetings, City Council Meetings, State Legislative Hearings, make calls to council members, or write letters. In short, do whatever you can to lift your voice, tell your truth, and make demands in spaces where decisions are being made.

The NAACP's Portland branch has worked to summon support from the Portland community, more than 150 organizations and businesses, as well as over 50 elected officials, public figures, and faith leaders for Portland's Clean Energy Fund Campaign. It is reported that the Portland Clean Energy Fund will generate "approximately \$30 million a year in new revenue for energy efficiency upgrades, home weatherization, rooftop solar, job training, local food production, and more green infrastructure." By including diverse participants in the policy-making process, Portland's Clean Energy Fund promises to build a more just and cleaner future for all of Portland.



In 2009, Sheila Holt Orstead participated in the NAACP's Environmental and Climate Justice Program's Youtube video series that documented her activism and advocacy in environmental policy-making. Orstead highlighted the environmental injustices resulting from well water contamination in Dickson, Tennessee in which city officials knew of the contamination as a result of toxic waste dumped into the area and its threats to communities. While white families were removed from using the tainted well water by

city officials, Black communities continued to drink the toxic water. The continued exposure to tainted well water caused both Sheila and her family members to develop cancer and other serious illnesses.

After a nine-year battle in the courts, a settlement was reached in 2011 that not only provided compensation for damages for the Holt family, but also ensured the protection of basic human rights for residents of Dickson with safe drinking water. Orsted shows us all that our voices matter to stop injustice.

“

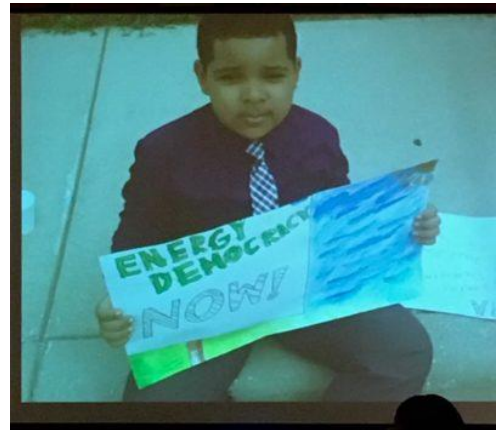
The community knows what the community needs, and everything we need to promote positive change in Peoria is in Peoria,” says Nia McFarland-Drye of the Peoria NAACP about the process. “Many of the advising community groups have been involved in environmental justice for a very long time; they know what the impact looks like in underserved areas from micro to macro levels.

”

- [NRDC](#)

With strategic communication, networking, and direct engagement of diverse participants, we reinforce our demand to shift away from polluting practices towards energy efficiency and clean energy.

Over the years, the NAACP’s Coal Blooded Report has challenged pollution from DTE’s coal plants impacting people and planet as well as the DTE practices that have shut off electricity from impoverished customers in Detroit. Meanwhile, at the local level, the Detroit Metro Branch of the NAACP built a relationship which resulted in the branch being in a position to successfully advocate for customers in need who are facing shut offs, as well as ensuring that improved programming is in place to provide support for residential energy efficiency, and also supporting underrepresented students in STEM.



REMEMBER TO VOTE!

Get our communities to the poll to ensure that we vote on ordinances/policies/ballot initiatives that match our interests!

Our Indiana NAACP State Conference of Branches commitment to equity has created pathways to increase broader social and economic participation in the state’s energy system. Demonstrating that unburdened, access to options is vital for a just transition towards a more energy efficient society, the branch has worked with legislators and community stakeholders to challenge pro-fossil fuel policies for more renewable energy alternatives. The branch continues its efforts to close the “green divide” so that BIPOC and low-income communities can experience the benefits of a more environmentally safe society as much as white, wealthy communities.

Additionally, the Kentucky NAACP State Conference of Branches continues its efforts to reduce the state's dependency on coal. Recently, the branch has authored legislative resolutions to embed environmental justice practices that focus on assessing permits related to all construction and environmental projects within the state, as well as developing Public Service Commission (committee that regulates utilities) plans for rate configurations that support affordable rates for low-income families.

Take Legal Action



If you are in a community suffering from pollution from a fossil fuel facility, seek legal counsel and determine if some form of legal action is advised symbolically or otherwise. Ensure that community benefits agreements are in place for any new development in our communities to ensure that community interests are upheld to the greatest extent possible.

The NAACP Gulfport, MS Branch of the NAACP stood with the MS Chapter of the Sierra Club as they ended a 6-year legal battle with the Mississippi Power Company (MPC). The agreement brought \$15 million in energy efficiency and clean energy investments to the state. The agreement allowed for homeowners to install solar power by ensuring that MPC would stop its lobbying practices against net metering. Further, the agreement required power plants in Gulfport, Mississippi and Greene County, Alabama to stop burning coal over the next 20 months.



Reverse Citizens United

Given that corporate power is enforced and supported in policies such as Citizen's United, consider action on removing this barrier to democracy!

Move to Amend, with the tag line, "We the People, not We the Corporations," is executing a nationwide, grassroots campaign to educate and mobilize the public on what is meant beyond the deceptive moniker of "citizens united."





When Citizens United was decided in 2010, corporations didn't just start funneling dollars into political campaigns. For decades, they had already been doing just that. Yet, the Supreme Court's decision made backdoors deals a "right."

As of February 2021, Move to Amend continues to make progress towards their goal to end corporate constitutional rights and power through their *We the People* Amendment, House Joint Resolution 48 (HJR 48). Currently, the organization has 33 co-sponsors committed to reintroducing HJR 48 in Congress and is committed to securing more support for the fight.

The NAACP agrees with this initiative and is firmly aligned with imposing constraints on corporate personhood and influence on our political system.

Support Campaign Finance Reform

Overall, the use of wealth by the fossil fuel industry to sway elections and elected officials is a longstanding practice that corrupts our democracy. The path would be better with public financing of elections and the removal of any corporate influence.

To support public voice and pathways, the NAACP maintains its membership to the Democracy Initiative and the President and CEO serves on its Board of Directors. Thanks to the leadership and support Democracy Initiative, concrete steps like the 2015 measure for clean, accountable elections in Maine and democracy vouchers in Seattle, promote fair and just standards that eliminate barriers for people from all walks of life to run for office, not just the wealthy elite. These reforms have a direct impact on the lives of communities of color, young people, people with disabilities, and working people that work to create a safe, healthy environment for all residents.

Further, the NAACP has publicly announced its support for the "For the People" Act, H.R.1 Election Reform Bill, that champions protecting our votes, ending gerrymandering practices, and reducing the influence of corporate money, (i.e., "big money" donors) in the election process. As the 2020 election has shown, voters are committed to participate in elections – even when faced with challenges and obstacles posed by a life-threatening pandemic.

List of Technical Resources

- I. NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program Resources
 - a. [Coal Blooded Report](#)
 - b. [Coal Blooded Action Toolkit](#)
 - c. [Engaging with Public Utilities/Public Service Commissions](#)
 - d. [Just Energy Policies Report](#)
 - e. [Lights Out in the Coal Report](#)
 - f. [Power to the People Toolkit—Just Energy Policies Action Toolkit](#)

- II. Organizations Exposing Fossil Fuel Machinations and Democracy
 - a. [Center for Media and Democracy](#)
 - b. [Center for Public Integrity](#)
 - c. [Center for Responsive Politics/Open Secrets](#)
 - d. [Democracy Initiative](#)
 - e. [Energy and Policy Institute](#)

- III. Organizational Resources on Building the New Energy Economy
 - a. [Center for Social Inclusion](#)
 - b. [Climate Justice Alliance](#)
 - c. [Institute for Local Self Reliance](#)
 - d. [Movement Generation](#)
 - e. [Movement Strategy Center](#)
 - f. [New Economy Coalition](#)

Glossary of Terms

The following glossary of terms provides readers with foundational understanding of the concepts and terms outlined in this report. Term definitions have been adapted from the Environmental Protection Agency glossaries.⁹¹

- **Climate change:** refers to any significant change in measure of climate (such as temperature, precipitation, or wind) lasting for a long period of time. Human activities that change the Earth's atmosphere composition (e.g. through burning fossil fuels) and land surface (e.g. deforestation, reforestation, urbanization, etc.) contribute to changes in climate.
- **Disproportionate impact (of communities):** refers to communities of low income and/or color and in the presence of high-risk environmental hazards. Such communities exposed to these hazards have an increased risk of developing more chronic health problems than other communities, typically communities of middle-high income and/or white communities (EPA, 2010).
- **Energy efficiency:** refers to products or systems using less energy to do the same (or better job) than conventional, or historically-used systems. Energy efficiency has an economic value as it saves money, while helping to protect the environment.
- **Fossil fuels:** are the nation's principal source of electricity. There are three major forms of fossil fuels: coal, oil, and natural gas. Fossil fuels are a finite resource and cannot be replenished once extracted.
- **Fossil fuel industry:** refers to the companies and businesses associated with fossil fuels (coal, natural gas, oil).
- **Fenceline communities:** refers to communities that are immediately adjacent to a company and is affected by the company's operations (i.e., noise, traffic, emissions, etc.)
- **Frontline communities:** refers to communities that experience the first and/or worst effects of climate change. These are typically communities of color and low-income communities.
- **Global warming:** refers to the increase of the Earth's surface temperature. The term is often used to predict the warming that will occur with increased greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Greenhouse effect:** refers to the trapping of heat in the atmosphere near the Earth's surface. The warming is attributed to the buildup of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other gas emissions.

⁹¹ Environmental Protection Agency. (n.d.). Search results terms and acronyms. Retrieved from https://sor.epa.gov/sor_internet/registry/termreg/searchandretrieve/termsandacronyms/search.do?search=&term=frontline&matchCriteria=Contains&checkedAcronym=true&checkedTerm=true&hasDefinitions=false

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- Greenhouse gas emissions refers to the greenhouse gases (Co₂, methane, nitrous oxide) released into the air through human activities (e.g. fossil fuel consumption, burning coal, etc.)
 - Net Metering: enables residents and businesses who generate their own renewable electricity (e.g. through solar panels) to receive compensation for the electricity they generate. Net metering rules track how much energy is used and how much is returned to the electric grid. Customers can save money on energy not used and returned to the grid.
 - Renewable energy: refers to the electricity supplied from renewable energy sources (i.e., wind, solar, hydropower) that are replenished on the Earth.

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Fossil Fuel Emissions Kill – Disproportionately Killing Residents of BIPOC and Low-Income Communities

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