

# New Joe Biden plan sees millions of jobs in aggressive climate action

On Wednesday, presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden revealed a revamped climate and energy plan that raises spending, expands efforts to address racial disparities, and sets an earlier deadline for cutting greenhouse gases.

Biden's plan aims to eliminate carbon pollution from the power sector by 2035. Biden had previously committed to reaching a 100 percent "clean energy economy" by 2050. The plan comes with a \$2 trillion price tag over four years, higher than his previous ten-year \$1.7 trillion plan. Forty percent of clean energy investments will be earmarked for "disadvantaged communities."

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Biden's more ambitious climate plans reflect recommendations made by a joint task force that he assembled alongside Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) in an effort to win over more progressive voters. Some influential groups like 350 Action and Sunrise Movement initially backed Sanders, who had taken a tougher stance against fossil fuels. Sunrise Movement executive director Varshini Prakash was part of the task force.

"It's no secret that we've been critical of Vice President's [sic] Biden's plans and commitments in the past. Today, he's responded to many of those criticisms," Prakash said in a statement today.

Alongside his new clean energy plan, Biden rolled out a

separate plan to address the disparities that pollution and climate change create. “Any sound energy and environmental policy must advance public health and economic opportunity for all Americans, in rural, urban, and suburban communities, and recognize that communities of color and low-income communities have faced disproportionate harm from climate change and environmental contaminants for decades,” the environmental justice plan says.

*We cannot solve the climate crisis without advancing racial, social, and economic justice. We are thrilled to see LCVAF-endorsed @JoeBiden release two new environmental plans today that center on advancing justice and equity as we solve the climate crisis. #BuildBackBetter pic.twitter.com/n4dSKUdADb*

*– LCV – League of Conservation Voters (@LCVoters) July 14, 2020*

Biden’s campaign doesn’t describe its new plan as a Green New Deal, but it follows a similar strategy of emphasizing how aggressive climate action could create jobs. In particular, the plan presents this climate push as a way to help the US recover from the economic crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. He foresees 1 million new jobs tied to making electric vehicles and charging stations. Millions more union jobs could come from building greener infrastructure. Biden wants to build sustainable new housing and upgrade millions of buildings and homes, which he says would create at least another million jobs. He also wants to invest in zero-emissions mass transit.

*Millions more union jobs could come from building greener infrastructure*

Biden’s plan to tackle climate change calls for “net zero” emissions by the middle of the century, which – unlike Sanders’ plan – leaves the door open for continued fossil fuel use as long as the resulting carbon dioxide emissions are

drawn down by new technologies or tree-planting initiatives. He also doesn't explicitly call for an end to fracking, which environmentalists have pushed for him to do but could cost him key swing votes in states like Pennsylvania. Biden also calls for investments in nuclear energy – which is a hot-button issue among environmentalists because it doesn't generate greenhouse gases, but it still entails digging up uranium and leaves behind radioactive waste.

Reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 falls in line with targets set in the landmark Paris climate agreement, which Biden hopes to recommit the US to after President Donald Trump moved to remove the US from the accord. Failing to reach net-zero emissions globally in that timeframe would have disastrous consequences, according to the United Nations panel of climate scientists, including the destruction of the world's coral reefs and the exposure of 37 percent of the global population to dangerous heat waves at least once every five years.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/7/14/21324575/joe-biden-jobs-climate-change-plan-energy-elections>