



August 12th, 2022

**STEERING  
COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS**

**Arturo Garcia-Costas**  
**Committee Co-Chair**  
Friends of the Earth,  
New York State Energy  
Research and Development  
Authority

**Dianne Dillon-Ridgley**  
**Committee Co-Chair**  
Center for International  
Environmental Law

**Michel Gelobter**  
**Committee Co-Chair**  
Ceres, Natural Resources  
Defense Council Emeritus

**Ayako Nagano**  
Clean Water Fund,  
Common Vision

**Pallavi Phartiyal**  
American Rivers

**Allison Chin**  
Training for Change,  
Sierra Club

**Tamara Toles O'Laughlin**  
Women's Voices for the  
Earth

**Joy Blackwood**  
Physicians for Social  
Responsibility

**Dr. Michael K. Dorsey**  
Sunrise, Center for  
Environmental Health,  
Food First

**Tykee James**  
Wyncote Audubon Society

**Francisco Ollervides**  
The Ohio Environmental  
Council

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
US House of Representatives  
Room H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
US Senate  
Room S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

The Green Leadership Trust (GLT) is a cross-organizational network that builds the power of the environmental movement by expanding the impact and leadership of Black, Indigenous, Latinx and all people of color serving on its Boards of Directors. We have been part of decades of groundwork that catalyzed both the White House and Congress' advancement of a climate agenda that recognizes how racialized communities and working people are critical constituencies in the battle against climate change.

As we are on the brink of the passage of historic energy and climate legislation through Congress, we, the undersigned members of GLT, are deeply disturbed by ways that the Inflation Reduction Act (The Act) diminishes that climate agenda. We are deeply troubled that several of The Act's provisions will delay progress towards just climate policies because of its failure to address the core environmental and economic well-being of communities. We urge the Administration (and our own environmental movement) to reckon with how essential community is injured by The Act and to immediately respond with climate policies, regulations, and curative legislation that can respond to the harms it will produce.

The Inflation Reduction Act contains provisions that will unleash technological responses to the climate crisis, allocating billions of dollars for clean energy and vehicles, and other incentives. The Act invests billions in industrial and infrastructure investments. It has the potential to provide for needed housing upgrades and jobs. It also aims to improve air quality and ensure access to clean drinking water. However, the legislation includes relatively modest levels of investment in the environmental justice communities that have suffered disproportionately from our nation's reliance on fossil fuels.

In our analysis, the legislative package will expand sacrifice zones to compound harm to our communities. Similarly, we are concerned that the majority of mainstream environmental organizations have failed to elevate these concerns. Specifically, we are alarmed about the following provisions:

- Provides generous tax credits but, as a result, neglects the pocket-book support that working people will need to move away from fossil fuels, like increased mass transit,

income-independent subsidies for shifting to electric appliances, and other forms of progressive economic incentives. In addition, a reliance on tax credits to polluters has the net economic effect of subsidizing them and undermining critical sources of revenue (polluter pays) we all need to move towards efficiency and renewables

- Includes support for carbon capture and sequestration (CCS). The Administration must plot a course back towards power plant policy that is both environmentally sound and politically sustainable. It must ensure that CCS neither extends the life of plants that should be mothballed asap nor extends the toxic pollution risks that fence-line communities already face.
- Mandates that the federal government offer up parts of the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska's Cook Inlet for oil and gas development. It also requires additional oil and gas leasing, in order for new wind and solar projects to be approved.
- Grants extra legal approval of the Mountain Valley Pipeline, a project which has been opposed for years by environmentalists, civil rights activists, and many Democratic state lawmakers in Virginia, which would carry natural gas from the Marcellus shale fields in West Virginia across nearly 1,000 streams and wetlands before ending in Virginia.
- Provides for an odious side deal to approve a separate bill that would make it harder for opponents to challenge energy projects under the National Environmental Policy Act – a bedrock environmental law – by setting a two-year time limit for challenges.
- Requires the president to establish twenty five “priority” projects on federal lands that must include fossil fuels and nuclear energy.
- Revises a section of the Clean Water Act in a way that would make it more difficult to block or delay pipeline projects.
- Overlooks and excludes community based financial institutions, such as MDIs, CDFIs and credit unions, from directly benefiting and thus enabling climate finance.

In addition to these devastating compromises, we are exasperated by the continued reliance on exclusive and undemocratic processes for public matters. The impact of which is that the fossil fuel interests had more of a say in the making of game changing legislation than the people whose health and safety are determined by its contents.

Our members are life long advocates from impacted communities of color. And while we understand high stakes deal-making, we reject compromises that continue to put fossil fuel development at the center of our nation's economy. We cannot abide the continued willingness by our nation's leadership to sacrifice the lives and health of our communities on the altars of greed and political expediency. And certainly not for bargains that are unsustainable, unjust, and morally unconscionable.

In this moment, we remain committed to our life's work of protecting the sacred and the sustainable. We affirm that the future requires us to speak out. In our collective capacity we stand committed to the long-term fight for equity, justice, and a better future for our children and this planet.

Sincerely,

The Green Leadership Trust

\*Board affiliations are included for identification purposes and does not signify endorsement by the organization

Endorsing Individuals\*

**William J Barber III, J.D.**  
Rural Beacon Initiative

**Joy Blackwood**

**Bray Beltrán**  
COMPASS Science  
Communication  
Network for Landscape  
Conservation

**Ronda Lee Chapman**  
River Network  
Justice Outside  
Center for Diversity in the  
Environment

**Allison Chin**

**Chanté Coleman**  
NatureBridge  
San Diego Coastkeeper

**Diane Dillon-Ridgely**  
Center for International  
Environmental Law

**Clara Fang**  
Association of Environmental  
Studies and Sciences

**Arturo Garcia-Costas**  
Friends of the Earth  
Friends of the Earth Action

**Michel Gelobter**

**José G. González**

**Dr. Adrienne Hollis, JD, PhD.**

**Randy Jones**

**Tykee James**  
DC Audubon Society

**Larissa Johnson**  
Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation of Rockville

**Joseph M. Kinard**  
The Climate Group, North  
America

**Michél Legendre**  
Power Shift Network  
Climate Mobilization Project

**Mark Magana**  
Green 2.0  
Children's Environmental Health  
The League of Conservation  
Voters

**Aaron Mair**  
Arbor Hill Environmental Justice,  
Inc.

**Anuja Mendiratta**

**Steffanie Munguía**  
National Audubon Society

**Kent Salazar**  
National Wildlife Federation

**Raya Salter**

**Maurice Sampson II**  
Clean Water Action, 1991 to 2016

**Ruth Santiago**  
Earthjustice

**Mustafa Santiago Ali**

**Russell Smith**

**Tamara Toles O'Laughlin**  
Friends of the Earth Action  
Good Energy Project  
Climate Refugees

**Vernice Miller-Travis**  
Clean Water Action  
NRDC Action Fund

**Jumana Vasi**  
River Network

**Marilyn Waite**

**Emira Woods**  
Wallace Global Fund

**Rev. Lennox Yearwood Jr.**  
Evergreen Action  
Hip Hop Caucus

