Final Proposals of the WA Climate Assembly
Adopted 2/27/21

I. Renewable Energy Transitions

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B. Pursue Equitable Economic Policy Levers to Increase Access to Renewables
C. Reinforce and Fund the Renewable Energy Storage and Distribution Infrastructure and Systems to Increase the Capacity of Renewables
D. Pursue Actions to Increase Use of Renewables and Make the Switch from Fossil Fuels

II. Buildings

A. Create Programs to Build Green Buildings and Equitably House People in Affordable Green Buildings
B. Incentivize the Use and Installation of Renewable Energy Infrastructure in Buildings

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B. Increase Education About Carbon Emissions and Increase Carbon Emission Transparency in Manufacturing
V. Forest and Soil Health

A. **Expand Support for Farmers and Encourage Regenerative Agriculture Practices**

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VI. Reducing Travel Carbon Footprint

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B. **Increase Access to Electric Vehicles**

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VII. Centering Communities

A. **Ensure a Just Transition for Workers Entering Green Jobs**

B. **Increase Cooperation Between Local and State Governments and Public-Private Businesses**

C. **Increase Community Resilience and Access to Nature**

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VIII. Education and Behavior Change

A. **Funding the Creation of New Programming and Curriculum Updates in Youth Education to Incorporate Climate Change**

B. **Creating Accessible Public Outreach Campaigns on Climate Change**

IX. Health

A. **Create Policies that Address the Disproportionate Health Impacts of Climate Change**
I. **Renewable Energy Transitions**

I.A Research and Fund the Shift to Low Carbon New Technologies

Considering the contribution of fossil fuels to climate change and Assembly's aim to reduce carbon emissions, we recommend the following:

- Direct funds from carbon regulations into research on solutions by non-profits, tribal governments, community organizations, and WA higher education institutions and job creation for people from communities disproportionately impacted by climate change (#1).
- Invest in research on new technologies for carbon capture and sequestration (#2).
- Invest in research and development of new renewable energy technologies and products to reuse carbon dioxide, such as using old fuel sources (#3).
- Develop solar on non-functional nuclear sites such as Hanford (#4).
- Carefully consider new nuclear power technologies and awareness of new nuclear options, and ensuring that low income and indigenous communities are not disproportionately impacted by development. (#5).
- Create ways for state-level regulations to support communities in implementing and benefiting from local renewable energy generation (#6).
- Facilitate closed-loop energy transfer from generators (like farms/landfills) to utilities (#7).
- Increase safety of renewable energy batteries (#8).

I.B Pursue Equitable Economic Policy Levers to Increase Access to Renewables

Considering the Assembly's aim to develop renewable energy affordable to all and address the high costs of clean energy alternatives that can cause inequitable access as well as the potential negative environmental impacts of renewable energy infrastructure on local communities, we recommend the following:

- Provide capped zero-interest loans and grants for solar and other renewables and energy efficiency upgrades for primary residences and small businesses (as defined by the WA State Legislature - independent operations and 50 employees or fewer), especially with greater funds to communities with more health disparities and environmental impacts (#9).
- Omit sales tax on green energy sources (e.g., solar panels, electric cars) (#10).
- Distribute funds collected from a carbon fee to subsidize communities and homes converting to renewable technologies, giving them revenue-generating assets such as solar panels, wind turbines, and other forms of renewable energy generation (#11).
- Establish rate structures to promote local investment/excess-of-individual-needed investment into locally produced energy, such as upsized rooftop solar, that ensures that small businesses and
disproportionately impacted communities - such as Tribes and households get affordable energy (#12).
- Track cost-effectiveness metrics for building and transportation energy efficiency options to see where the state should focus more resources (#13).
- Incentivize the availability of more options for renewable products/solutions at different price points (e.g., offering a more affordable electric vehicle with fewer features) (#14).

I.C Reinforce and Fund the Renewable Energy Storage and Distribution Infrastructure and Systems to Increase the Capacity of Renewables

Considering the Assembly’s awareness of current challenges with renewable energy battery storage and grid capacity, we recommend the following:

- Create electric grid buyback programs that benefit local businesses and disproportionately impacted communities, for examples by changing rate structures to incentivize utilities to buy renewable energy (#15).
- Ensure reliable energy systems with sufficient electric grid updates and energy storage—such as energy storage for commercial and industrial facilities, vehicle-to-home storage solutions, or a diversity of energy sources—and finding alternative storage capacity to accommodate additional burden (#16).
- Fund research for increased renewable energy capacity that will ensure enough energy to support usage levels (#17).
- Ensure that the energy grid is reliable and scalable by establishing measurable benchmarks and goals and creating a contingency plan for if the grid is overwhelmed (#18).
- Ensure that viable storage and distribution matches creation of new renewable energy generators (#19).

I.D Pursue Actions to Increase Use of Renewables and Make the Switch from Fossil Fuels

Considering the contribution of fossil fuels to climate change and the Assembly’s aim to support better utilization of existing renewable energy options and investments in new renewable energy infrastructure while reducing disproportionate economic burdens on residents, we recommend the following:

- Establish target percentages of renewables used by electric/gas utilities that increase to match the state’s climate goals (#20).
- Subsidize the state’s renewable energy industries, such as through the Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA) (#21).
- Provide incentives for farmers to grow crops and use methods that do not contribute to GHG emissions (#22).
- Provide financial incentives (e.g., grant funding) to encourage people to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources (#23).
- Implement carbon pricing to incentivize companies to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources (#24).
- Build more renewable energy infrastructure to facilitate the switch away from fossil fuels (#25).
- Encourage all sectors to invest in solar canopies and other technologies, especially for disproportionately impacted communities (#26).

II. **Buildings**

II.A Create Programs to Build Green Buildings and Equitably House People in Affordable Green Buildings

*Considering current inefficiencies in use of land and space for development, as well as the Assembly’s aim to encourage green development through incentives rather than penalties and to increase affordability and reduce impacts on low income households, we recommend the following:*

- Incentivize all new buildings (residential and commercial) to have certain green designations, such as green appliances and energy efficient and regenerative systems (#27).
- Amend zoning, land use, and building codes to require energy efficient technology (#28).
- Use comprehensive environmental impact assessments that include climate mitigation and environmental justice considerations for land use decisions (#29).
- Create programs—such as a clean-up/homeownership program—to help low income families and small businesses afford green building renovations and purchasing, and require landlords to meet minimum green building standards (#30).
- Pursue net metering to make renewable energy in homes more affordable (#31).
- Install urban greenery and provide incentives for planting green spaces in, around, and on top of buildings (#32).
- Create incentives or introducing subsidies to have affordable options to remodel and reuse building spaces to improve sustainability—such as by fitting windows with solar panels or Venetian blinds—instead of building new structures (#33).
- Ensure that ordinances consider environmental justice and residential equity (#34).
II.B Incentivize the Use and Installation of Renewable Energy Infrastructure in Buildings

Considering current energy inefficiencies in buildings and the Assembly’s aim to integrate energy generation into homes and buildings, we recommend the following:

- Promote micro-hydopower projects for building energy, such as using stormwater runoff to generate power (#35).
- Use geothermal heat to heat buildings in the winter (#36).

III. Circular Economy and Zero Waste

III.A Mandate Zero Waste Initiatives and Fund New Avenues to Reduce Waste and Create a Circular Economy

Considering the Assembly’s aim to shift to a circular economy and the limited pathways currently available for transitioning, including the unsustainability of the recycling industry, we recommend the following:

- Identify and expand statewide recycling requirements (#37).
- Provide incentives to businesses—especially small businesses—to use less packaging and materials (#38).
- Implement a payback system for recycling and reusing, such as punch card rewards for recycling batteries and ink cartridges (#39).
- Require businesses and apartment complexes to recycle, for example by creating a system for companies or manufacturers to pay recycling fees (#40).
- Research future technologies for clean waste disposal and recycling (e.g., plasma arc recycling) (#41).
- Improve access to and increase the number of recycling centers and receptacles, especially for low-income communities, and ensure that residents are responsibly recycling (#42).
- Support and encourage businesses to support the right to repair, or the ability of consumers to repair their electronic devices rather than purchasing brand new devices (#43).
- Implement a bottle deposit program similar to Oregon’s (#44).
- Provide incentives for the food industry and amend health department rules for food donations (#45).
- Establish composting standards that benefit natural systems, such as agriculture (#46).
- Mandate composting and recycling services to be provided to communities, restaurants and schools (#47).
- Incentivize restaurants to compost their food waste (#48).
- Implement zero waste school lunch programs across the state (#49).
III.B Incentivize the Retirement of Nonrenewable Materials

Considering the currently low recycling rates and inefficiencies in the recycling system, the Assembly aims to transition away from single-use and disposable products to products and packaging with longer life-cycles and made with sustainable materials. To this end, we recommend the following:

- Encourage the removal of non-recyclable materials and single-use materials, such as banning or taxing styrofoam, plastics #3-7, and other non-recyclable materials (#50).
- Require a minimum amount of recycled content or green materials—such as hemp and bamboo—in containers, and providing incentives on the recycled and green materials (#51).
- Invest in research and development focused on eliminating the use of single-use plastic items (#52).
- Research and develop profitable ways to create renewable energy technologies out of recycled materials (#53).
- Create minimum quality standards and avenues to safely recycle and reuse batteries in renewable energy storage (#54).
- Develop and provide incentives for low-carbon or carbon-capturing materials that make them the more cost-preferable options (#55).

III.C Incentivize Manufacturers and Producers to Reduce Carbon Footprint and Increase the Use and Production of Reusable or Recyclable Materials

Considering current manufacturing practices do not reflect the true environmental costs of production and shipping as well as impacts on local communities, the Assembly aims to support a circular economy with local consumption and measures to hold companies accountable so costs are not passed on to communities. To that end, we recommend the following:

- Incentivize the manufacturing of reusable materials and production of recyclable materials (#56).
- Introduce a carbon price or fee to hold producers accountable for reducing pollution in freight and in the carbon footprint of their packaging and insure documentation of pollution reduction (#57).
- Provide incentives for producers to innovate and implement climate solutions (#58).
IV. Carbon Mitigation

IV.A Price Carbon Responsibly and Equitably and Reinvest Revenue in Green Solutions

Considering that polluting entities face few challenges to continue polluting and widespread lack of awareness about carbon pricing policies, as well as the Assembly’s aim to decouple Washington State’s economic growth from carbon emissions, we recommend the following:

- Implement hybrid carbon pricing models to allow for weaning off of fossil fuels (#62).
  - Equitably pricing carbon by placing a carbon tax on the biggest contributors and reinvesting to reduce emissions and mitigate inequities for disproportionately impacted communities. Using tax revenue to reduce emissions and have accountability to ensure that these investments are strategically distributed and driven by scientific data. (#59)
  - Implement a carbon fee by: 1) equitably placing a fee on heavy carbon-producing industries, and 2) reinvesting to reduce emissions (#60).
- Use carbon offsets by: 1) implementing a carbon offsetting program using market-based mechanisms to price carbon, and 2) expanding these policies to include individual landowners and land trusts in a variety of locations to ensure the financial benefits are felt locally (#61).
- Ensure that carbon pricing is transparent—i.e., it is clear who is getting priced and why (#63).
- Reward companies that have reduced carbon emissions by giving carbon credits (#64).
- Provide approved options for renewable energy tax incentives (#65).

IV.B Increase Education About Carbon Emissions and Increase Carbon Emission Transparency in Manufacturing

Considering the complexity of carbon pricing mechanisms that can inhibit public understanding and awareness, we recommend the following:

- Incentivize and require businesses to declare the carbon content of their products, similar to nutrition labels or restaurant health ratings. Creating an independent oversight committee to ensure quantification and verification of labels. (#66)
- Raise consumer awareness on the benefits of carbon policies by demonstrating the true cost of carbon and keeping it at the forefront (#67).
V. Forest and Soil Health

V.A Expand Support for Farmers and Encourage Regenerative Agriculture Practices

Considering declining soil health and crop productivity, the Assembly aims to improve these measures through incentives and support the livelihood of farmers. To this end, we recommend the following:

- Rapidly phase out clearcutting and the use of synthetic fertilizers (#68).
- Encourage crop rotation, low-/no-till practices, and regenerative agriculture practices and provide mechanisms for farmers to meet safety standards while integrating grazing into farming rotations (#69).
- Include measurable targets for carbon capture and soil health (#70).
- Financially support farmers to encourage the transition to regenerative properties including crop rotation and low/no till to help with soil carbon sequestration (#71).
- Expand and improve education/outreach programs for farmers (#72).
- Create ordinances to regulate the clean-up of existing pollution (#73).
- Prioritize barren land to plant crops/trees/plants (#74).

V.B Improve Forest Management by Reforesting and Conserving Natural Lands

Considering the Assembly’s aim to reduce the area of Washington State affected by wildfires and mitigate associated carbon emissions, we recommend the following:

- Reforest affected logging areas with appropriate renewable alternatives (#75).
- Use variable density thinning that removes far less tree volume, controlled burns, and physical forest vegetation practices (#76).
- Set conservation values in forestry higher to encourage rebuilding carbon stockpiles as more valuable than marketing trees as resources (#77).
- Conserve and restore natural lands for the purposes of achieving sustainable forests (#78).

VI. Reducing Travel Carbon Footprint

VI.A Pursue Green Modes of Transportation and Encourage Less Travel

Considering the Assembly’s aim to generate regional solutions that include low-income families and encourage less vehicle-based travel while supporting residents who are not able to telecommute, we recommend the following:
• Provide incentives for places of employment to create opportunities for telecommuting and flexible work schedules including infrastructure and incentives for ISPs to add more affordable internet for low income and/or rural areas, and encourage employees to work from home (#79).
• Implement mixed-use zoning to reduce travel distances, promote alternative transportation, and build more social cohesion and resilience in communities (#80).
• Conduct regional planning to give priority to low-carbon alternative fuels or electric public transportation (#81).
• Encourage employers to provide resources for employees transitioning to working from home (#82).
• Increase awareness and participation by engaging with the local community when developing solutions (#83).
• Prioritize the conversion of all public transportation to low-emissions and clean energy options that are affordable and accessible (#84).

VI.B Increase Access to Electric Vehicles

Considering fossil fuels’ contribution to climate change, the Assembly aims to support a sustainable transportation system that encourages behavior change while reducing disproportionate economic burdens on residents. To that end, we recommend the following:

• Provide incentives for purchasing electric vehicles and using electric vehicles for ride sharing services, such as offering grants to low-income residents to purchase EVs and reducing taxes on green transportation like EVs (#85).
• Form public-private partnerships to expand charging infrastructure and support safe battery recycling (#86).
• Develop regulations to support vehicle-to-home or vehicle-to-grid electricity conveyance (#87).
• Install free electric vehicle charging stations at all publicly funded buildings and places, including rest stops, schools, police/fire stations, and parks (#88).
• Require larger government fleets to switch to electric vehicles to model desired behavior and identify and address any additional barriers to electric vehicle adoption (#89).
• Incentivize centralized EV charging placement in local and tribal communities (#90).
• Use equitable subsidies for electric vehicles for mass transit/providing free mass transit (#91).
• Do not penalize rural and tribal communities for driving more for services (#92).
• Provide incentives for households to install charging infrastructure in their homes (#93).
VI.C Expand Funding for Green Transportation

Considering that climate change solutions require funding and engagement from all government levels, as well as the Assembly’s desire to reduce vehicle-based travel and encourage similar behavior change through incentives, we recommend the following:

- Use carbon pricing to generate revenue that is then reinvested in efforts to reduce transportation sector emissions (#95).
- Adopt zero-emissions standards for all vehicles used for delivery/shipment purposes or other high-occupancy vehicles over a certain size/weight (#96).
- Advocate to the federal government to raise standards for gas mileage (#97).
- Provide low-cost or subsidized mass transit (#98).
- Incentivize industry trip reduction programs (e.g., mass Amazon drop offs) (#99).
- Generate or allocating more local revenue options for local government and private corporations to fund climate change action (#100).

VII. Centering Communities

VII.A Ensure a Just Transition for Workers Entering Green Jobs

Considering the lack of environmental justice principles codified in law, limited local services-based operations, and patterns in job growth and losses across industries, we recommend the following:

- Provide incentives (public awareness, scholarships, OJT programs, trade school, certification programs) to become career professionals who work on climate justice (#101).
- Shift to a community-based regenerative economy: hire local, build local, keep money in the local economy (#102).
- Coordinate WA green jobs and zero-carbon goals with other states and countries (#103).
- Assist or encourage employers to train employees in the shift to green jobs, offer state-provided job training, or support private job training programs; offering grants for people who are unfairly impacted to help them find new employment in a green industry (#104).
- Establish support for people whose employment and/or income would be impacted by climate policy (path forward for people in carbon-intensive industries); priority hiring for people who lose their jobs due to climate mitigation (#105).
VII.B Increase Cooperation Between Local and State Governments and Public-Private Businesses

Considering current disconnects between regional climate planning and local needs, the Assembly aims to bridge the divide, particularly in the context of energy production and consumption. To this end, we recommend the following:

- Have the State provide financial incentives for local and tribal governments to administer and implement local climate action. Ensuring that there are parameters/conditions on how the money can be used and agreeing on a list of action items that must be committed in order to qualify for funding (#106).

VII.C Increase Community Resilience and Access to Nature

Considering climate change impacts on coastal communities, industries, and environments, as well as barriers low-income communities face to accessing nature, we recommend the following:

- Provide subsidies and incentives to plant trees in low income communities (#108).
- Promote native vegetation and composting in yards and community gardens (e.g., using native species instead of introduced ones for ornamental/gardening, discouraging environmentally intensive plantings like lawns in areas where they are not necessary to protect against wildfire) (#109).
- Allow, permitting for, and incentivizing community green energy installations (#110).
- Encourage more green spaces in cities (#111).
- Encourage community involvement, such as having businesses donate space/vegetation for community use and creating neighborhood teams to help plant vegetation or care for green life around the city (#112).
- Center local municipalities and local and tribal communities to provide oversight of climate mitigation policy implementation—such as identifying problems and allocating funds—to ensure that the most significant local issues are addressed. Community input on prioritization can be via voting or referenda (#113).

VII.D Encourage Community Land Use

Considering the disproportionate impacts of climate change on communities, as well as the greater resilience of communities with stronger social ties and geographic connectivity compared to areas and jurisdictions that are more isolated, we recommend the following:

- Encourage community connections by building sidewalks or bike lanes (#114).
• Create regional and statewide climate change goals—such as mandatory maximum carbon emissions—and systems of accountability to meet these goals (e.g., providing incentives to businesses) (#115).
• Streamline policies and processes to reduce burdens and expedite actions, especially for local governments, while supporting native vegetation/trees in greenspaces and removing restrictions on environmentally-friendly property modifications like insulation and solar panels (#116).
• Hold regular Climate Assembly series, especially as knowledge and participation grows, to make sure we are on the right track (#117).
• Examine impacts regionally—especially among our neighbors in the Pacific Northwest (adjacent states and British Columbia) (#118).
• Incentivize private-governmental partnerships to address local environmental issues (#119).

VII.E Prioritize Equitable Financial Investments in Communities

Considering that current economic policies, including carbon credit systems, generate income disparities and unfairly benefit the wealthy rather than the general public, as well as the high upfront costs of climate-mitigating investments, the Assembly acknowledges the need for targeted policies to ensure local and rural communities benefit from such investments. Given these considerations, we recommend the following:

• Create incentives for businesses and individuals to be a part of the circular economy—for example, subsidizing energy efficient water heating and emphasizing changes that reduce costs for participants (#120).
• Help establish new businesses or encourage existing businesses to produce sustainably and locally using incentives and/or tax exemptions (#121).
• Reform taxes—such as closing loopholes and increasing transparency—and requiring resulting revenues be invested equitably to address climate mitigation (#122).
• Recognize the differences between, and having tailored sets of solutions for, rural and urban communities by establishing working groups/policy interest groups (#123).

VII.F Honoring and Strengthening Tribal Sovereignty

Considering the disproportionate impact of climate change on tribes in Washington State as well as the lack of government action on issues pertaining to tribal representation and historic treaties, and recognizing the WA Climate Assembly does not represent the tribal community, we recommend the following:

• Create a community climate board with Tribes and local (city/county/municipal) governments to adopt and implement climate mitigation strategies that strengthen the community. All climate change
policy legislation should aim to strengthen government-to-government relations between Washington State and Tribes. (#124).

- Ensure the equal inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing and traditional ecological knowledge when making climate change legislation. Require free, prior, and informed consent from Tribes for the passing and implementation of climate change policies. (#125).
- Ensure that the State government will directly consult with Tribes in a regular, meaningful, and robust way in the legislative process and development of policies regarding climate change (#126).
- Approach legislative proposals with the acknowledgement that past actions taken by the Government have unfairly infringed on and negatively impacted Native Nations' sovereignty, autonomy, and interests, acknowledging that they are their own best representatives while creating space for Tribal equal participation, and ensure steps are taken to prevent this from happening again in the future (#127).

VIII. Education and Behavior Change

VIII.A Fund the Creation of New Programming and Curriculum Updates in Youth Education to Incorporate Climate Change

Considering that youth are drivers of change, and yet educational content and funding is inconsistent across Washington schools, the Assembly aims to support climate change education that is representative of all perspectives. To that end, we recommend the following:

- Fund climate change education programs and curricula for youth that are universal and provide education/training for teachers on all aspects of sustainability, including consumption, recycling, and behavior change (#128).
- Create comprehensive education in schools & curriculum from K-12 on climate change causes, impacts, and solutions (#129).
- Designate space and guiding WA state curriculum to include/require critical thinking, media literacy, and reliable non-political resources for online education (#130).
- Create easy-to-understand annual progress reports on various environment metrics to see our progress and where to put more resources in the future (#131).
- Develop additional funding for programs and student leadership groups in schools/communities for consistent support (#132).
- Create home gardening education in schools and communities, including soil science, hydroponic gardening, and by having school-based community gardens (#133).
• Require focused units in current courses in public schools to have material sciences focusing on renewable energy/materials, soil regeneration, and waste management (#134).

VIII.B Creating Accessible Public Outreach Campaigns on Climate Change

Considering the existing climate education generates confusion, lack of trust, and anxiety, as well as the lack of education about waste streams, the Assembly aims to support education about climate change, representing all perspectives, for the general public to encourage communities and businesses to be part of climate solutions. To this end, we recommend the following:

• Educate the public about how pollutants negatively impact water, soil, and air quality and other climate change topics via services such as DOL (#135).
• Use new ways to spread information/educate about climate change, recycling, and reusing to a broader audience, including youth, through social media (e.g., TikTok), and public spaces (grocery stores, libraries, parks, etc.) (#136).
• Create consistent climate change messaging in public service campaigns, focusing on building hope and actuating change, and building a sense of pride of American advancement—not just a public service announcement (#137).
• Use clear and understandable examples in public outreach around carbon reduction and pricing policies (i.e., shifting blame away from individual residents and onto big companies, addressing who is paying for costs, etc.) (#138).
• Create a public education campaign focused on climate change and its implications for our health (#139).
• Provide sustainable supports (e.g. training, education, capacity building) for building recognition of Tribal rights and strengthening meaningful collaboration between Tribal and non-tribal communities (#140).
• Create community education to develop cleaner living habits (e.g., educating folks on how to grow organic, where to recycle, or how to receive grants for solar) (#141).
• Create new state government campaigns to raise awareness around environmental issues (#142).

IX. Health

IX.A Create Policies that Address the Disproportionate Health Impacts of Climate Change

Considering that racial, social, cultural, and economic indicators determine the severity of climate change impacts resulting in disproportionate distribution of
health impacts, including for low-income communities and outdoor workers, the Assembly aims to support preventative plans to protect community health and ensure environmental justice. To that end, we recommend the following:

- Draft consistent rules and policies for state agencies and local governments to have climate change mitigation and adaptation policies also support health (#143).
- Prioritize and implement policies and ordinances of environmental justice and residential equity (#145).
- Create guidelines for identifying at-risk and disproportionately impacted communities (#146).
- Give higher priority for grants/subsidies to vulnerable communities to help decrease climate change vulnerability (#147).
- Require that policy decisions by local governments and the State exceed OSHA requirements and adequately address the health of workers in industries affected by climate change, such as firefighters and farmworkers (#148).