

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 30, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Deputy Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Janet Yellen
Secretary
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20220

The Honorable John Kerry
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden, Deputy Director Young, Secretary Blinken, Secretary Yellen, and Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Kerry:

We write to you with a continuing and pressing sense of urgency regarding the climate crisis. For too long our nation has not met its full potential to mitigate climate change and limit carbon emissions. The resulting inaction has put our nation and the world on the precipice of catastrophe. We do not use these words lightly, for current and impending climate change is truly an existential crisis. With this in mind, we also write to you with a renewed sense of hope, as your administration has the opportunity to finally bring our nation on course to swiftly and seriously address one of the greatest challenges in generations. With this in mind, we request that you recommit the United States to contributing to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and, in doing so, rehabilitate our nation's role as an international leader.

As you know, the Green Climate Fund is the world's largest dedicated fund helping developing countries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and enhance their ability to respond to climate change – aiming for a 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaptation investments over time.¹ Crucially, the GCF maintains an equitable governance structure, balanced between developed and developing countries.² The GCF is committed to stakeholder engagement and local input, ensuring direct access for the communities in which projects are funded. Furthermore, the GCF promotes fair labor and working conditions, and through its Environment and Social

¹ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/about#key-features>

² <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/governing-instrument.pdf>

Management System ensures protections for local communities.³ Of utmost importance, the GCF has is dedicated to protecting marginalized communities and promoting human rights, including through its Indigenous People’s Policy,⁴ Gender Policy,⁵ and Policy on the Prevention and Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment.⁶ The GCF continues to evaluate its practices and take additional steps to strengthen protections for marginalized groups. While the GCF, like any large multilateral fund, is not perfect – and problems with its management and programming have recently come to light⁷ – we believe it remains by far the best option for U.S. multilateral climate finance. The United States and a highly engaged civil society coalition continue to press for positive changes in the GCF’s management, governance, programming, and accountability.

In 2014, the United States pledged to contribute \$3 billion to the Green Climate Fund as part its Initial Resource Mobilization, during which 45 countries pledged a total of \$10.3 billion. However, only \$1 billion of the U.S. pledge was fulfilled and, under the Trump Administration, the remaining \$2 billion was never provided. In 2019, the GCF underwent its first replenishment (GCF-1), and 31 nations pledged a combined \$9.9 billion, with over half of the contributors more than doubling their initial pledges.⁸ Yet, the United States’ absence was felt, and the capacity of our nation to increase the available funds would be transformational to the GCF’s work.

It is clear that your administration understands the vital need to recommitting to the Green Climate Fund. On January 27th, President Biden issued an Executive Order that states, “The United States will also immediately begin to develop a climate finance plan, making strategic use of multilateral and bilateral channels and institutions, to assist developing countries in implementing ambitious emissions reduction measures.”⁹ Just two days prior, at the Climate Adaptation Summit 2021, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry declared, “We will significantly increase the flow of finance, including concessional finance, to adaptation and resilience initiatives. We will work with bilateral and multilateral institutions to improve the quality of resilience programming.”¹⁰ It is encouraging and invigorating to see such strong language from your administration. Special Envoy Kerry also recognized a key facet of international climate financing, which is that it is the poorest and most vulnerable peoples of the world face the worst impacts of climate change, though they contribute the least. It is in this spirit that the United States’ can embody global environmental justice through contributions to the Green Climate Fund.

As the world’s largest historical greenhouse gas emitter¹¹ and one of the wealthiest countries in the world, it is incumbent upon the United States to contribute its fair share to global mitigation

³ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/safeguards>

⁴ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b19-05>

⁵ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gender-policy>

⁶ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b28-03>

⁷ <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2021/03/12/green-climate-fund-whistleblowers-urge-us-take-money-elsewhere-toxic-workplace-fixed/>

⁸ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/about/resource-mobilisation/gcf-1>

⁹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/27/executive-order-on-tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad/>

¹⁰ <https://www.state.gov/opening-statement-at-climate-adaptation-summit-2021/>

¹¹ <https://ourworldindata.org/contributed-most-global-co2>

and adaptation efforts by providing financing to developing countries for just and equitable climate action. We therefore ask the administration to do the following:

- Make a new pledge to the GCF-1 replenishment of \$6 billion, in line with our global partners who have doubled their initial pledges.
- Include in the Fiscal Year 2022 Presidential Budget Request \$4 billion for the Green Climate Fund, paying off our arrears from the GCF's Initial Resource Mobilization and the first installment of our new, GCF-1 commitment.
- Signal support in your Fiscal Year 2022 Presidential Budget Request for a significant increase in the International Affairs budget to enable these climate commitments.

We believe this funding is essential to our shared goals of mitigating and adapting to climate change. Significantly increased international climate finance from the United States alongside other wealthy countries is a prerequisite for meeting the goal of keeping global temperature rise under 1.5, or even 2, degrees Celsius, and ensuring that communities around the world are able to survive the impacts of the crisis that are already being felt. Such investment will also have the welcome effect of putting the United States on a new, restored path of global leadership on climate change.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

/s/
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

/s/
Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress

/s/
Cori Bush
Member of Congress

/s/
Sean Casten
Member of Congress

/s/
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

/s/
Ed Case
Member of Congress

/s/
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

/s/
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

/s/
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

/s/
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

/s/
Jesús G. “Chuy” García
Member of Congress

/s/
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

/s/
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

/s/
Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress

/s/
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

/s/
Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress

/s/
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

/s/
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

/s/
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

/s/
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

/s/
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

/s/
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

/s/
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

/s/
Henry C. “Hank” Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/
William R. Keating
Member of Congress

/s/
Andy Levin
Member of Congress

/s/
Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress

/s/
Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

/s/
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

/s/
Dean Phillips
Member of Congress

/s/
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress

/s/
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

/s/
Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

/s/
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

/s/
Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

/s/
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/
Dina Titus
Member of Congress

/s/
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

/s/
Susan Wild
Member of Congress