



IMPACT ANALYSIS OF

INNOVATIVE CLIMATE POLICY ACHIEVEMENTS

THE SOLUTIONS PROJECT GRANTEES, 2021-2023

Just Solutions is a Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-led, national organization that drives innovation and scales proven, equitable policies and programs to advance the priorities of frontline communities most impacted by the climate crisis. Through our research, policy, education, and field-building programs, we partner closely with state organizations and coalitions on the design and implementation of climate solutions that strengthen the overall health and resiliency of our communities and accountable democratic systems and institutions. We know that deep, system-level change takes time and will require a more coordinated and powerful movement-wide approach. Toward this end, we convene leading thinkers and doers across multiple sectors and movements and align and leverage our collective expertise, resources, and networks to turn community-driven solutions into lasting policies and laws.

Shining a light on the just path forward.
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The Solutions Project (TSP) is a national non-profit organization that funds and amplifies climate justice solutions created by frontline communities building power for an equitable and regenerative economy. TSP employs a two-pronged grantmaking and narrative communications strategy to super-power grassroots climate justice solutions, prioritizing funding to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and women or non-binary leaders who are often overlooked in mainstream climate philanthropy.

Please visit our website to explore the [interactive map](#) of TSP's grantee partners across the U.S., including those whose policy achievements are included in this report.

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Key Findings

This report highlights a selection of the innovative policies that resulted from the work of frontline environmental justice communities and organizations supported by The Solutions Project (TSP) at the local, state, and federal levels over the past three years.

The Report Finds That the 20 Key Policy Achievements Led by or Involving TSP Grantees Have the Potential to:

BENEFIT OVER

106 Million People

at the National Level

43 Million People

at the State & Local Level

UNLOCKING OVER

+\$350 Billion for Climate Justice

in Public Investments

Introduction



Across the US, lower-income, Black, Indigenous, immigrant, women, and communities of color who are disproportionately impacted by climate change are mobilizing their communities to confront the climate crisis. They are assessing community needs, identifying innovative solutions, organizing, and achieving policy impact. They are increasing understanding about what works, what is possible, and what can be achieved to advance climate justice, whether it is responding to an immediate local need, such as providing relief from an extreme heat event, facilitating the shift away from fossil fuels at the state level, or embedding climate justice priorities into federal policymaking.

This report highlights the innovative policies that resulted from the work of frontline environmental justice communities and organizations supported by The Solutions Project (TSP) at the local, state, and federal levels over the past three years. Of course, policy design, success, and implementation require many stakeholders to achieve impact, especially at the federal level. TSP-grantees played key and longer-term roles to achieve historic federal policy success in the last three years, oftentimes through and alongside frontline members of the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council. The report maps and analyzes the impacts of selected policy achievements secured by TSP grantees as a result of TSP's investments and capacity-building support. Each of the examples analyzed include the work of TSP-funded grassroots groups or alliances who are understood to have played a key and longer-term role within a broader set of stakeholders. The achievements featured in the report indicate the success of TSP's movement accountable grantmaking model and can also serve as a model for future philanthropic action to ensure that a Just Transition can be realized.

A select number of representative policy successes across TSP grassroots grantee partners over the past three years that bring measurable benefits to people

and the planet are highlighted below. Our findings show that the 20 TSP grantee policy achievements analyzed have the potential to benefit over 106 million people at the national level and over 43 million people at the local and state levels. Policy achievements across climate justice issues, including clean energy, green jobs, pollution, and access to water. In aggregate, they also unlock \$367.2 billion in current and near-term public investments.

These policy achievements are to be celebrated, providing a moment to pause, share, appreciate, and gather collective strength and energy to move forward, while also highlighting opportunities to foster replication, scaling, and further innovation. This is what is possible when grassroots organizations and alliances are resourced and supported in their multi-dimensional strategies, including research, policy analysis, education, and field building programs to drive ground-up policy change for climate justice. These successes demonstrate what can be achieved by justice-centered organizations and coalitions with the vision, strategy, and political power to implement climate policies that strengthen their communities' health, economic security, and resilience. Philanthropy plays a crucial role in meeting future needs and fostering continued innovation by grassroots organizations and alliances.



Methodology

The climate successes presented below were identified through TSP’s media tracker, responses submitted by grantees through an assessment survey distributed by **Frontline Solutions**, and research conducted by Just Solutions. Only those policies or programs that were passed, adopted, or implemented from 2021 through 2023 are included. These successful efforts span the country, with a particular focus on model climate solutions resulting from TSP’s investments in New York and California, which are incredibly important “test kitchens” for the overall climate justice movement to set new policy standards, show what is possible for other states and localities, and inspire federal legislation.

Summary of Featured Policies Cumulative Impact

Policies Highlighted	20	
Intended Beneficiaries	Local & State Levels	43 Million People
	National Level	106 Million People
Climate Justice Funding	More than \$350 Billion in current and near-term future local, state, and federal investments	

TSP partnered with Just Solutions to assess what each of these initiatives will mean to communities across the country:

- The number of people who can benefit or are benefiting, with a focus on BIPOC communities
- The specific kinds of benefits or outcomes for people and the planet that can be expected from each initiative
- The broader impact or significance of the climate policy success as a model or tipping point for other geographies or levels of government policy-making

It should be noted that the efforts highlighted below are only a sample of many identified gains. We selected a breadth and depth of wins to showcase success, and there are many more, we are sure, about which we are unaware or were not chosen for this research.

In the pages that follow, 20 policies are highlighted. They are presented in alphabetical order by state within each section. The number of beneficiaries at the national level is drawn from Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) data sources showing the total number of people living in “Disadvantaged Communities” (DAC) across the country who are expected to benefit from the Justice40 Initiative. The local and state numbers of beneficiaries presented are, therefore, presumed to be a subset of the national estimate of all beneficiaries. In each featured initiative, the number of intended beneficiaries and total amount of funding reflect the best estimate, based upon available data, of the number of people who will or could benefit, along with the amount of money that has either been announced by a funding agency or appropriated, now or into the future, through legislation.





Oil and Gas Drilling Ordinance¹

Los Angeles, California

9.8 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

N/A

Funding

Both the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles unanimously voted to prohibit new oil and gas drilling and to phase out existing wells over the next 20 years. The legislation took effect in early 2023 and affects over 20,000 active, idle, or abandoned wells throughout the county. The Inglewood Oil Field – one of the largest in the area – was exempted from the initial legislation, but there is now legislation moving forward to end oil drilling at that location as well.

Beneficiaries

- One-third of Los Angeles County residents (2021 population of 9.8 million) is estimated to live less than one mile from an active drilling site
- Nearly 75% (over 7 million) of Los Angeles County residents are BIPOC
- About 75% of active wells are located within 1,640 feet of "sensitive land uses," which are locations such as homes, schools, parks, and senior living facilities

Benefits

- Improved respiratory health, reduction in preterm births, and prevention of other health conditions resulting from exposure to the carcinogens emitted by oil wells, such as benzene and formaldehyde
- Improved air quality, particularly for disproportionately impacted BIPOC communities living in close proximity to oil wells
- Reduction in exposures to industrial pollutants throughout the L.A. Basin

¹ City of Los Angeles, Ordinance No. 187709, December 2, 2022; Los Angeles County, Ordinance 2023-0004, January 24, 2023; Los Angeles Times, "In historic move, Los Angeles bans new oil wells, phases out existing ones," December 2, 2022; Bloomberg, "Los Angeles County Blocks New Oil Wells, Mirroring Citywide Ban," January 24, 2023; USA Today, "L.A.'s legacy of oil drilling impacts lung function in residents living near active and inactive wells," April 15, 2021; The Conversation, "LA's long, troubled history with urban oil drilling is nearing an end after years of health concerns," January 27, 2023; Los Angeles City Planning, "Oil and Gas Drilling Ordinance"; Science of The Total Environment, "Upstream oil and gas production and ambient air pollution in California," Volume 806, Part 1, February 1, 2022; Associated Press, "Los Angeles City Council votes to ban oil and gas drilling," December 3, 2022; Yale Environment 360, "Los Angeles City Council Moves to End Oil and Gas Drilling," December 5, 2022; LAist, "LA County To Phase Out Oil Drilling," January 24, 2023; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles.

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Residents living in close proximity to the wells will benefit from improved air quality, resulting in lower rates of asthma and other respiratory illnesses.



Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART)²

Miami-Dade County, Florida

1.071 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

\$300 Million

Funding for First Corridor

Adopted in 2016 by the Miami-Dade County Commission, construction of the SMART system is now getting underway. SMART consists of up to six rapid transit corridors. In 2021, the first project broke ground. The South Corridor is now under construction, which includes some of the fastest growing areas in the region. Construction is expected to begin on the Northeast Corridor in 2025, a majority BIPOC (75%), low-income area with high poverty rates and low rates of car ownership.

Funding Amount

\$3.6 billion (estimated overall cost for the SMART system)

Beneficiaries

- 63% of the population (estimated 1.7 million) who live within 2 miles of a transit corridor
- 855,000 workers in jobs located within 2 miles of a transit corridor (75% of all non-farm jobs)
- Over 175,000 zero vehicle households out of a population of about 320,000 in the Northeast Corridor

Benefits

- Economic development and housing construction along transit corridors
- Savings for workers and residents in time and money (The Federal Highway Administration estimates the annual cost of congestion to urban drivers is \$7 billion)
- Job creation from transit investments, which are estimated to be 20% more than for road construction and 2.5 times greater when jobs are located in areas of high unemployment
- Improved air quality

² Miami-Dade County, Florida, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 33C - Rapid Transit System - Development Zone; Mass Transit, "Miami-Dade breaks ground on South Corridor Rapid Transit Project," June 10, 2021; Miami-Dade County, Department of Transportation and Public Works, "Miami-Dade County SMART Program"; NBC Miami, "A closer look at the Northeast Corridor Rapid Transit Project, Miami-Dade's newest commuter train," October 11, 2023; Miami-Dade County, Department of Transportation and Public Works, "Northeast Corridor"; Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization, "SMART: Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit Plan"; Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization, "SMART Plan Corridor Inventory: Northeast Corridor," October 2017.

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The North and Northeast Corridor, areas with high levels of poverty and large BIPOC populations, are home to about 600,000 residents. Local employers provide nearly 300,000 jobs. Transit service will improve air quality in these regions, provide access to jobs, and foster economic development.



Rezoning and Permit Denials, South Louisiana Methanol³

St. James Parish, Louisiana

20,000

Beneficiaries (People)

N/A

Funding

The local effort to block construction of a 1500-acre methanol plant by South Louisiana Methanol dates to 2013. The proposed project, which would have converted fracked gas to methanol, was to have been located next to a local park in an overburdened community, part of Louisiana's "Cancer Alley." More than 30 industrial sites, including several petrochemical plants, are located in St. James Parish. In 2022, a local ordinance that would have rezoned a residential neighborhood as "residential/future industrial," necessary for the project to go forward, went down to defeat by the St. James Parish Council. Subsequently, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality rejected the company's permit, bringing the project to an end.

Beneficiaries

- Approximately 2,700 residents of St. James Parish's majority Black District 5, nearly 30% of whom are estimated to be living in poverty, who would have been directly impacted by the project
- Roughly 20,000 residents of St. James Parish

Benefits

Reduced risk of exposure to environmental pollutants and hazards for a community already at high risk from air quality toxins, groundwater pollutants, and frequent flooding.

³ Council of the Parish of St. James, "Official Proceedings of the Council of the Parish of St. James," August 31, 2022; State of Louisiana, Department of Environmental Quality, Letter to South Louisiana Methanol, LP, September 1, 2022; Earthjustice, "Louisiana Residents Celebrate Stopping South Louisiana Methanol's Petrochemical Complex," September 9, 2022; Common Dreams, "Locals Celebrate 'Tremendous Victory' Against South Louisiana Methanol Petrochemical Complex," September 9, 2022; Sierra Club Magazine, "The Revolution in St. James: A community in Louisiana refuses to be zoned out of existence," October 10, 2019; The Lens, "Methanol company on its own to resolve stalled \$2.2 billion project after St. James Parish rejects rezoning bid," September 1, 2022; The Lens, "Lawsuit: Buildout of industrial facilities in Black areas of St. James Parish is discrimination," March 22, 2023; Center for Biological Diversity, "Army Corps Urged to Block Louisiana Methanol Facility Over Potential Groundwater Harms," February 9, 2022; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles.

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The plant would have been one of the world's largest methanol plants and would have released 2 million tons of greenhouse gases annually. The defeat of the ordinance also means that the company cannot sell the property for another industrial use.



Leading the Charge⁴

New York, New York

56,000

Beneficiaries (Students)

\$4 Billion

Funding

Leading the Charge, which launched in 2022, is a major initiative under New York City's Local Law 97 and the largest school electrification project in the US. Through the initiative, all new school construction will be all-electric, and 100 existing schools will be converted to all-electric heating by 2030. The program also includes plans to switch 800 schools, or about half of all facilities, to LED lighting, as well as a training program for skilled workers to support New York City's clean energy transition. The selection of the 100 schools will prioritize those with high asthma rates and those schools using No. 4 heating oil.

Beneficiaries

- 225 students (95% BIPOC) at Dr. Robert McNair Elementary in Bedford-Stuyvesant, the first school to be converted to all-electric heating
- An estimated 56,000 students across 100 public schools, about 85% of whom are BIPOC (based on average school student population size)
- 19 schools located in environmental justice communities, which will be prioritized for upgrades over the next two years
- 80 additional schools located in areas with high asthma rates by 2030

Benefits

- Improved school environments and air quality
- Reduced childhood asthma rates
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions estimated to be the equivalent of removing 26,000 cars from the streets of New York
- Green jobs and a Just Transition for skilled workers

⁴ New York City, Sustainable Buildings, "Local Law 97"; New York City, "Leading the Charge"; New York City, Office of the Mayor, "Mayor Adams Announces \$4 billion Plan to Make new Schools All-Electric, Electrify 100 Existing Schools," October 28, 2022; New York City Department of Health, "Epi Data Brief: Disparities among Children with Asthma in New York City," September 2021; New York City Public Schools, "DOE Data at a Glance"; The Architect's Newspaper, "Mayor Eric Adams announces \$4 billion initiative to electrify New York City schools," November 1, 2022; silive.com, "NYC public schools to be all-electric: 7 things to know about the \$4 billion plan," February 21, 2023; Physicians, Scientists and Engineers (PSE) for Healthy Energy, Solutions Project Portfolio Carbon Dioxide Impact Analysis," September 2023.

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In 2021, about 60,000 children in grades K-8 living in New York City had active asthma, the majority of whom are BIPOC. The highest asthma rates were in the Bronx and Brooklyn, which had more than 500,000 children ages 5-14 in 2020, according to US Census data. Improved air quality in schools will result in better health outcomes for children, teachers, and staff.



Renewable Ravenswood⁵

New York, New York

2 Million+
Beneficiaries (People)

\$300 Million
Funding

In January 2023, Queens-based Rise Light & Power, LLC announced a project that will convert the Ravenswood Generating Station from fossil fuels to offshore wind. The project comes as a result of New York State's 2022 Offshore Wind Solicitation. The 27-acre Ravenswood site, New York's largest power generating facility, will become a clean energy hub.

Funding Amount

\$300 million in private investments by Rise Light & Power

Beneficiaries

- Over 1.2 million people who live within three miles of the Ravenswood Generating Station
- Over 13,000 majority-BIPOC residents of three public housing facilities who live within 1.5 miles of the plant
- Residents of more than 2 million homes will have renewable power
- Over 100 employees -- mostly union members -- who work at the facility

Benefits

- Improved air quality in a part of Queens known as "Asthma Alley"
- Upskilling for union workers through training programs and job opportunities to ensure a Just Transition
- Reduction of 900,000 metric tons of CO2 each year at the project level, the equivalent of removing 200,000 cars from the road

⁵ New York State, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, "2022 Offshore Wind Solicitation"; PR Newswire, "Rise Light & Power Proposes Nation's First Renewable Repowering of Fossil Generation with Offshore Wind," January 24, 2023; Rise Light & Power, "Critical Infrastructure for NYC: Ravenswood Generating Station"; Reuters, "Rise Light & Power to redevelop Ravenswood power plant in New York as renewable energy hub," July 13, 2022; Gothamist, "Queens locals get closer look at plans to make NYC's largest power plant 'green'," New York City Housing Authority, "NYCHA Breaks Ground on \$88 million Recovery and Resiliency Project at Astoria Houses," September 9, 2016; PSE, "Solutions Project Portfolio Carbon Dioxide Impact Analysis," September 2023.

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This will be the nation's first repowering of a major fuel plant from fossil fuels to offshore wind. As Ravenswood is the largest power generator in New York City, providing 20% of total capacity, the transition to clean energy will have significant economic, health, and climate benefits. Given its leadership example, if similar measures are adopted across New York State, a distinct possibility, this would reduce 26 million metric tons of CO2 each year.



Ban on Combustion of Fossil Fuels in New Buildings⁶

New York, New York

104,560

Beneficiaries (Residents & Electricians)

N/A

Funding

The ban requires that all new buildings under seven stories are all electric beginning in December 2023, with a few exceptions (e.g., emergency power, restaurants). All new construction, regardless of size, must be fully electric by 2027.

Beneficiaries

- Residents of the nearly 26,000 new housing units constructed annually (based on 2022 data)
- Estimated 66,560 New York City residents (based on an average 2022 household size of 2.56)
- Up to 38,000 electricians who are employed in the New York metropolitan area

Benefits

- Improved indoor air quality and reduced rates of asthma, which can be up to 42% higher for children living in a home with a gas stove
- More clean energy jobs
- Reduction of 150,000 metric tons of carbon at the local level, the equivalent of removing 32,000 cars

⁶ New York City Council, [Int 2317-2021](#), December 22, 2021; New York City Department of City Planning, Housing Division, ["NYC Housing Production Snapshot, 2022,"](#) June 27, 2023; New York Times, ["N.Y.C.'s Gas Ban Takes Fight Against Climate Change to the Kitchen,"](#) December 15, 2021; RMI, ["Stopping Gas Hookups in New Construction in NYC Would Cut Carbon and Costs,"](#) December 10, 2021; WE ACT for Environmental Justice, ["WE ACT Celebrates New York City Mayor's Fossil Fuel Ban,"](#) January 28 2020; PSE, ["Solutions Project Portfolio Carbon Dioxide Impact Analysis,"](#) September 2023; US Bureau of Labor Statistics, ["Occupational Employment and Wages,"](#) May 2022; US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles.](#)

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New York became the largest city and the first large cold-weather city to pass such legislation. Buildings in New York are responsible for about 70% of the city's emissions, New York City also reportedly represents 5% of all gas burned in buildings in the US. Eliminating this source of greenhouse gas emissions in new construction will have a sizable impact on building-related emissions. It has since been adopted at the state level, increasing this positive climate impact.



Excessive Heat Swimming Pool Fee Waiver⁷

Austin, Texas

958,000

Beneficiaries (People)

N/A

Funding

During an excessive heat event in the summer of 2023, the Austin Parks and Recreation Department waive admission fees at Austin's public pools. Admission fees are charged at 8 regional pools. The fees were waived for all but one of the pools for the period of August 9th to October 1st. Fees for residents are \$2 for children ages 1-11 and adults over age 62, \$3 for children ages 12-17, and \$5 for adults.

Beneficiaries

Approx. 958,000 Austin residents, 52.3% or roughly 500,000 of whom are BIPOC

Benefits

- Savings of \$10 per trip to the pool for a family of three (one adult, one child under age 14, and one teen ages 15-19; the average family size in Austin is 2.96 people)
- Savings of \$4 per trip for a 65+ household (two people)

⁷ City of Austin, "Pool Fees Waived Through October 1," August 8, 2023; Austin-American Statesman, "These Austin pools are offering free admission through Sept. 30 due to Texas heat wave," August 10, 2023; KUT News, "Austin pools are free and open longer this summer. Why isn't Barton Springs included?," August 12, 2023; City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, "Pool Fees and Rentals"; Headwaters Economics, "Neighborhoods at Risk: Austin, Texas."

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Nearly 90% of Austin lacks adequate tree canopy to provide relief from extreme heat. Extreme heat can aggravate cardiovascular and respiratory conditions and can result in heat-related illness.

BIPOC and low-income people have higher rates of chronic disease, making them particularly susceptible to extreme heat. Providing relief from the heat can improve health outcomes and prevent heat-related illness, hospitalization, and death.

Local Drainage Program Appropriation⁸

Houston, Texas

200,000+

Beneficiaries (People)

\$20 Million

Funding

The City of Houston's 2024 Adopted Budget includes provisions for the Local Drainage Program, which maintains and rehabilitates Houston's drainage systems. Unlike wealthier neighborhoods that have curb and gutter systems maintained by the City, many low-income and BIPOC neighborhoods have open ditch drainage. For the past 20 years, residents have had to clean their own clogged drainage ditches. The budget provides funds and a commitment by the City to take responsibility for maintaining the open drainage ditches.

Beneficiaries

Over 200,000 residents of Northeast Houston, where most of the city's open ditch drainage systems are located; 92% of Northeast Houston residents are BIPOC (based on Census Bureau zip code data).

Benefits

- Reduced exposure to industrial waste during storm events, including potential exposures to Northeast Houston residents from runoff from a local creosote deposit, the largest in Texas, and a local landfill
- Mosquito controls and reduced threat of mosquito-borne illness

⁸ City of Houston, "Adopted Operating Budget," 2023-2024; Bayou City Waterkeeper, "Are We Any Closer to Finding Justice in the Sewers?"; abc13, "'We just made history': City of Houston passes Mayor Turner's final budget, totaling \$6.2B," June 7, 2023; abc13, "'Our water has nowhere to go': Northeast Houston residents petition city for more drainage funding," June 6, 2023; City of Houston Planning and Development Department, "Super Neighborhoods: Demographics"; Next City, "Unclogging Climate Injustices Requires Persistent Community Action," August 3, 2023; River Network, "Demanding Drainage Justice in Houston Through Evidence-Based Advocacy," June 7, 2023; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles.

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An estimated 75-80% of Houston's open drainage ditches are located in majority BIPOC and low-income neighborhoods. This commitment from the City will improve the health and safety of residents, particularly during rain events.

Trees for Kids⁹

Arizona

73,000

Beneficiaries (Students)

\$300,000

Funding

The Trees for Kids program was created through a line item in the Arizona State Budget that was passed in May 2023 after a bill that would have funded the program (SB 1689) failed to move forward. The program provides grants ranging from \$1,250 to \$10,000 for planting trees at public schools throughout the state. Through December 31, 2023, the legislation prioritized low-income public schools, defined as those where 75% or more of students receive a free or reduced price school lunch. In 2021-22, at least 500 Arizona public schools met this criteria. On January 1, 2024, remaining funds became available to all schools.

Beneficiaries

- Students, teachers, and staff in 21 schools or school districts, a third of which are majority BIPOC, which were awarded grants in amounts ranging from \$4,600 to \$10,000, as of December 2023
- 73,000 students represented by these grantees

Benefits

- Shelter during heat events at schools currently lacking adequate tree canopy
- Improved air quality
- Reduced risk of heat-related illness / hospitalizations for students, teachers, and staff

⁹ Arizona State Legislature, [Senate Bill 1720](#), 2023; KVOA, "[Gov. Hobbs passes \\$300,000 tree-planting bill](#)," May 17, 2023; Arizona Department of Education, Health, and Nutrition Services, "[Free and Reduced-Price Percentage Report Arizona Department of Education Health and Nutrition Services, School Year 2021-2022](#)"; Axios, "[Nearly half of Phoenix-area residents live on a 'heat island'](#)," August 15, 2023; Trees for Kids; AZ Central, "['You had me at trees': An easy fix for Arizona school shade takes root. But will it grow?](#)," September 13, 2023; National Center for Education Statistics; raw grantee data provided to the authors via public records request to the Arizona State Department of Education, December 26, 2023.



Trees planted under this program will provide some relief from extreme heat events for students, teachers, and staff at the selected schools.

Storm Assistance for Undocumented Immigrants (SAI) Program¹⁰

California

1.9 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

\$95 Million

Funding

Following plans announced in 2023 by Governor Gavin Newsom, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is providing state-funded storm recovery services to those who cannot access federal assistance due to immigration status. Assistance will include case management and direct assistance payments of up to \$4,500 per household, intended to cover costs such as housing, food, and transportation for those impacted by recent storms. Storm recovery services are available in those counties where the President has issued a Major Disaster Declaration and approved Individual Assistance (IA).

Funding Amount

\$95 million (within the eligible 25 counties)

Beneficiaries

Undocumented residents of 25 counties in California where eligible providers are delivering services (Approximately 1.9 million California residents were undocumented in 2021, about 5% of the total population.)

Benefits

- Available funding (\$95 million) to support the needs of undocumented flooding victims
- Increased recovery and resilience for undocumented residents

¹⁰ California Department of Social Services, "Storm Assistance for Immigrants (SAI)"; Cal Matters, "California to send \$95 million to undocumented flooding victims – months after promising 'rapid response,'" May 31, 2023; The Pew Research Center, "What we know about unauthorized immigrants living in the U.S.," November 16, 2023; US Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), "Individual Assistance Declaration Factors," October 27, 2023.

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Those in need can often be reluctant to seek assistance or apply for benefits for which they are eligible because of fears related to their immigration status. This program alleviates those concerns through the provision of much-needed state-funded relief.

Ban on Neighborhood Oil and Gas Wells¹¹

California

2.7 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

N/A

Funding

The passage of SB 1137 in 2022 creates a buffer zone around oil and gas wells. The law prohibits new oil and gas wells, or major retrofitting of existing wells, within a new buffer zone of 3,200 feet between the wells and homes, schools, nursing homes, and hospitals. It also requires companies to monitor leaks and emissions and install alarms. The law is expected to affect 28,367 (about 27%) of all wells, 2,540 (about 27%) new drilling permits, and 3,082 (roughly half) rework permits.

Beneficiaries

- More than 2.7 million Californians who live within the 3,200-foot buffer zone in California
 - 70% of whom are People of Color
 - About 6% of whom are children under 5
 - About 21% of whom are children under 18
- Residents of Kern and Los Angeles counties where most of those affected live

Benefits

- Improved community health and safety
- Reduction in childhood asthma and other health impacts
- Improved air quality
- Reduced exposure to industrial pollutants

¹¹ California State Legislature, [Senate Bill 1137](#), September 19, 2022; Whittier Daily News, ["Gov. Newsom signs SB 1137, creating a safety buffer between homes and oil wells in California,"](#) September 16, 2022; Cal Matters, ["Newsom's call now: Tracking California bills passed in the 2022 legislative session,"](#) September 30, 2022; Fract Tracker Alliance, ["Implications of a 3,200' Setback in California";](#) Grist, ["California passed a milestone law to stop neighborhood drilling. Now Big Oil has launched its counterattack,"](#) December 20, 2022.

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The passage of this legislation was a hard-earned and significant victory for advocates and community stakeholders working to protect community health and safety and to regulate oil and gas interests.



Climate and Equitable Jobs Act¹²

Illinois

12.67 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

\$735 Million

Annual Funding

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), Public Act 102-0662, was enacted in 2021. The legislation includes provisions to phase out carbon emissions from the energy and transportation sectors and establishes rebate and grant programs for electric vehicles and charging stations. It increases funding for the Illinois Solar for All program, from \$30 million to \$70 million a year and establishes a \$40 million grant program to support communities impacted by power plant closings. In total, CEJA includes a \$735 million annual budget, plus additional payments to economically struggling Illinois nuclear plants totaling about \$700 million over five years. CEJA sets the goal of 100% renewable energy in Illinois by 2050.

Beneficiaries

- 12.67 million residents of Illinois
 - Over 1.5 million of whom are low-income
 - Over 5 million of whom are People of Color
- More than 2,000 energy sector workers

Benefits

- Clean energy workforce and contractor development programs in Black and Brown communities
- Increased affordability of electric vehicles for Illinois residents
- Improved air quality and public health

¹² Illinois State Legislature, [Public Act 102-0662](#); Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, ["Climate and Equitable Jobs Act"](#); Citizens Utility Board, ["The Climate & Equitable Jobs Act"](#); Natural Resource Defense Council, ["Illinois Passes Nation-Leading, Equitable Climate Bill,"](#) September 12, 2021; Statista, ["Poverty rate in Illinois in the United States from 2000 to 2022,"](#) September 2023; Sierra Club Illinois Chapter, ["Climate and Equitable Jobs Act"](#); US Census Bureau, [Quick Facts Illinois](#), 2023.



This legislation serves as a national model for comprehensive and equitable climate policymaking.



Ban on Combustion of Fossil Fuels in New Buildings¹³

New York

107,100

Beneficiaries (Residents)

N/A

Funding

Enacted in 2023 as part of the 2023-2024 state budget, this legislation will require all-electric heating and cooking in new buildings under seven stories by 2026. All new construction, regardless of size, must be all-electric by 2029, with a few exceptions (e.g., restaurants, and hospitals).

Beneficiaries

- Residents of the nearly 42,000 new privately-owned housing units constructed annually (based on 2022 data)
- Estimated 107,100 New York residents (based on an average 2022 household size of 2.55)

Benefits

- Improved indoor air quality
- Reduced rates of asthma, the current prevalence of which is 8.2% among children ages 0-17 and 9.5% among adults in New York
- More clean energy jobs
- In combination with the New York City legislation, prevention of up to 6.1 million metric tons of carbon emissions by 2040

¹³ Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie, "Enacted SFY 2023-24 Budget Includes Provisions to Reduce New York State's Reliance on Fossil Fuels," May 2, 2023; Canary Media, "New York passes first statewide ban on gas in new buildings," May 3, 2023; CNN, "New York becomes the first state to ban natural gas stoves and furnaces in most new buildings," May 3, 2023; New York State Department of Health, "New York State Asthma Dashboard"; US Census Bureau, [Permits by State](#); US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, [2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles](#), December 26, 2023SE, "Solutions Project Portfolio Carbon Dioxide Impact Analysis," September 2023.

← IMPACT →

New York is the first state to ban fossil fuels in most new building construction. As buildings are estimated to account for 32% of the state's emissions, this legislation promises to significantly reduce emissions.



Build Public Renewables Act¹⁴

New York

750,000

Beneficiaries (Residents)

\$25 Million

Annual Funding

Passed in 2023, the Build Public Renewables Act (A00279/S04134) requires the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to shift entirely to providing renewable energy and power to its customers. It also requires that NYPA become the sole power provider for all state- and municipal-owned properties. It also puts in place strong labor protections, including prevailing wage and project labor agreements for workers. Under the law, six high-polluting peaker plants in New York City that are operated by NYPA – and that are concentrated in lower-income, BIPOC neighborhoods – will be required to shut down by 2030. The legislation additionally calls for the creation of the Renewable Energy Access and Community Help (REACH) program, which will create the means for low- and moderate-income residents to receive bill credits through the renewable energy resources developed.

Beneficiaries

- 750,000 New York City residents who live within one mile of a peaker plant, 78% of whom are low-income or People of Color
- Over one million union members, including 1199 SEIU, NYSUT, and UAW 9A

Benefits

- Affordable clean energy for low- to moderate-income people
- Worker training opportunities within the renewable energy sector (\$25 million per year)
- Publicly-provided renewable energy

¹⁴ New York State Legislature, [Senate Bill S4134](#), February 3, 2023; New York State Legislature, [Senate Bill S4006-C](#), February 1, 2023; Utility Dive, [“New York Power Authority given broad authority to own, operate, build and finance renewable energy projects,”](#) May 4, 2023; The Peak Coalition, [“The Fossil Fuel End Game,”](#) March 2021; Public Power NY, [“The Build Public Renewables Act is the biggest climate bill in the US,”](#); The Guardian, [“New York takes big step toward renewable energy in ‘historic’ climate win,”](#) May 3, 2023; New York Power Authority, [“Renewable Energy Access and Community Help.”](#)

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Peaker plants emit nearly 2.7 million tons of carbon dioxide in New York City annually, about 5% of the city’s total 2019 CO₂ emissions. NYPA is the country’s largest publicly-owned power source. Making this shift will lower emissions while increasing affordability and workforce development opportunities to residents and workers.

New York State Climate Action Council Scoping Plan¹⁵

New York

6.9 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

N/A

Funding

This Scoping Plan includes recommendations to meet the Climate Act's nation-leading goals and requirements, including actions to achieve a reduction in economy-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of 40% by 2030 and 85% by 2050 from 1990 levels. It outlines a variety of regulatory and legal changes, market mechanisms, and technologies essential to achieving the goals and requirements of the Climate Act. For example, it recommends the implementation of an economy-wide New York Cap- and-Invest (NYCI) program that would set an annual cap on the amount of greenhouse gas pollution that can be emitted in New York. As of December 2023, New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) are continuing the public process to develop NYCI regulatory proposals prior to issuing a draft regulatory package and starting the formal regulatory process.

Beneficiaries

- 6.9 million people, or 35% of New York's population, who meet the criteria of living in a "Disadvantaged Community" (DAC)
- 61% of the DAC census tracts where BIPOC people make up a majority of the population

Benefits

- Prioritization of Disadvantaged Communities and the creation of good, family-sustaining, union jobs accessible to all New Yorkers
- Increased incentives to shift away from fossil fuels
- More affordable energy for consumers and disadvantaged communities

¹⁵ New York State, "New York's Scoping Plan"; New York State, "Cap-and-Invest"; New York State, "Disadvantaged Communities Criteria"; New York State, "Cap-and-Invest Outline and Affordability Study Released," December 20, 2023; E & E News by Politico, "Wealthy N.Y. areas called 'disadvantaged' for climate aid," July 12, 2022.

← IMPACT →

By implementing an economy-wide approach that places a declining cap on emissions, this scoping plan spurs the shift to a clean energy economy. It supports jobs and affordable energy by directing proceeds towards investments in climate mitigation, energy efficiency, clean transportation, and other projects.

Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act¹⁶

Washington

3.1 Million

Beneficiaries (Residents)

\$700-800 Million

Funding

The HEAL Act of 2021 requires key state agencies, including the Departments of Transportation, Health, Commerce, and Ecology, to reduce environmental and health disparities by, in part, incorporating environmental justice into agency planning processes, fostering an environment of co-governance with frontline communities, conducting environmental justice assessments of agency plans and actions, and incorporating environmental justice concerns into budgeting decisions. The legislation requires that a minimum of 35% of the proceeds from the state's Climate Commitment Act (CCA) – a cap-and-invest program – are directed to frontline communities.

Beneficiaries

- Residents of 580 census tracts across Washington State identified as at high risk (above 7) in the Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map, which informs work related to HEAL implementation
- More than 3.1 million residents, about 45% of whom (over 1.4 million) are BIPOC (33% of the statewide population)

Benefits

- Improved environmental and health outcomes in high risk communities
- More equitable distribution of funding and its resulting benefits
- Increased community voice in state agency decision making
- Increased community resilience

¹⁶ Washington State Legislature, [Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5141](#), May 17, 2021; Western Environmental Law Center, ["Washington State's Healthy Environment for All \(HEAL\) Act"](#); Front and Centered, ["Healthy Environment for All \(HEAL\) Act"](#); Front and Centered, ["Legislature Falls Short on Community Climate Commitments in 2023–2025 Budget"](#), September 21, 2023; Washington State Department of Health, ["Environmental Justice"](#); Washington State Department of Health, ["Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map"](#); Washington Department of Health, [Washington Tracking Network](#), Web, 'People of Color'. Data sourced from the Office of Financial Management and ACS. Published by WTN on October 15, 2018.

← IMPACT →

The 2021 HEAL Act is considered landmark legislation and is a historic first step in incorporating environmental justice priorities into state policy making. The Act seeks to prevent people with lower incomes, workers, and communities of color from bearing the disproportionate impacts of climate change and to foster a more equitable distribution of state resources throughout the transition to a clean energy economy.

Extreme Heat Executive Action¹⁷

National

32 Million
Beneficiaries (People)

N/A
Funding

In the absence of Congressional action to create a federal heat standard, President Biden has directed the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and other agencies to enhance workplace safety, build local resilience, and address disproportionate heat impacts. OSHA is launching a rulemaking process to develop a workplace heat standard, the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) on heat illness prevention in outdoor and indoor work settings. The Department of Labor is launching a multi-pronged initiative on occupational heat exposure to protect outdoor workers, including agricultural, construction, and delivery workers, as well as indoor workers, including those in warehouses, factories, and kitchens. This directive by the Biden administration puts in place a strategy for protecting workers from extreme heat.

Beneficiaries

32 million people, about 45% of whom are BIPOC, whose jobs involve considerable time outdoors

Benefits

- Increased worker safety, including in Arizona, which accounts for nearly half of the country's heat-related deaths
- Decreased economic loss from extreme heat, including in Texas, which accounts for nearly a third of the country's heat-related economic losses
- New enforcement mechanisms, as OSHA prioritizes heat-related interventions and workplace inspections on days when the heat index exceeds 80°F
- Fewer heat-related illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths

¹⁷ The White House, "FACT SHEET: Biden Administration Mobilizes to Protect Workers and Communities from Extreme Heat," September 20, 2021; U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, "US Department of Labor initiates rulemaking to protect workers, outdoors and indoors, from heat hazards amid rising temperatures," October 26, 2021; Atlantic Council, "Heat is killing us - and the economy too," August 31, 2021; US Bureau of Labor Statistic, "36 work-related deaths due to environmental heat exposure in 2021," June 5, 2023; The Guardian, "Too hot to work: the dire impact of extreme heat on outdoor US jobs," August 17, 2021; Union of Concerned Scientists, "Too Hot To Work."

← IMPACT →

Extreme heat is a significant cause of mortality in the United States. Over 8,500 deaths annually are associated with daily average temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Since 2011, 436 workers have died on the job as the result of extreme heat. There are currently about 120,000 occupational injuries due to extreme heat each year. By 2050, that is expected to rise to almost 450,000 without federal and state action to protect workers.

Tribal Co-Management of Federal Lands¹⁸

National

2 Million
Beneficiaries (People)

+ \$90 Million
Funding

In November 2021, the Secretaries of the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) signed Joint Secretarial Order No. 3403, committing to a policy of co-stewardship of the approximately 620 million acres (27% of all lands in the US) owned by the US federal government. Since the policy was adopted, over 200 co-stewardship agreements have been signed by the three agencies. The USDA alone has provided \$90 million to its co-stewardship agreements since 2021.

¹⁸ US Department of Agriculture and US Department of the Interior, Joint Order No. 3403, "Joint Secretarial Order on Fulfilling the Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters," November 15, 2021; US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, "Tribal Leaders Directory"; US Department of the Interior, "First Annual Report on Tribal Co-Stewardship," November 2022; US Department of the Interior, "Second Annual Report on Tribal Co-Stewardship," December 2023; US Department of Agriculture, "First Annual Report on Tribal Co-Stewardship," November 30, 2022; US Department of Agriculture, "Annual Report on Tribal Co-Stewardship," December 2023; The White House, Domestic Policy Council, "2023 Progress Report for Tribal Nations," December 4, 2023.

Beneficiaries

Members of 574 Federally-Recognized Tribes
(approximately 2 million people)

Benefits

- Stream, watershed, and floodplain restoration
- Fish production, restoration, and habitat
- Fuels reduction and forest restoration
- Wildfire protection planning and management
- Financial assistance agreements to facilitate the work
- Bison and other wildlife restoration and management
- Cultural resource preservation

← IMPACT →

The efforts by the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce mark a historic shift, recognizing Indigenous expertise and knowledge and the shared interests of the US federal government and Indigenous People in managing, conserving, and preserving federal lands and waters.

Justice40 Initiative¹⁹

National

106 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

+ \$358 Billion

2021–2024 Funding

In January 2021, President Biden issued the Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, EO 14008. It established the Justice40 Initiative, requiring that 40% of federal climate and infrastructure investments benefit “disadvantaged communities.” Covered programs – currently representing 518 programs across 19 agencies – include those addressing clean energy investments, transit, affordable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and clean water infrastructure. Justice40 is estimated to apply to \$2.2 trillion in federal funding, with \$1.2 trillion expected to be spent over a five-year period. In 2023, the Administration announced that \$118 billion had been released for programs covered by Justice40. We include a 2024 estimate, based on overall projections for Justice40, of \$280 billion through the end of the Biden Administration’s first term.

Beneficiaries

Nearly 106 million people living in over 26,000 “Disadvantaged Community” (DAC) census tracts, as defined by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)

Benefits

- Increased capacity of DACs to participate in a Just Transition to a clean energy economy
- Improved health, welfare, and climate resilience in DACs
- Increased capacity to hold officials accountable for allocation decisions
- New tools to assess needs and measure progress, including the CEJST and the Environmental Justice Scorecard

¹⁹ The White House, “Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,” January 27, 2021; Harvard University, Environmental and Energy Law Program, “Federal Environmental Justice Tracker”; The White House, “Justice40: A Whole of Government Initiative”; World Resources Institute, “2 Years of Justice40: Integrating Environmental Justice into US Climate Policy,” January 24, 2023; Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool; Environmental Justice Scorecard; Climate XChange, “Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is - Best Practices for Implementing Biden’s Justice40 Initiative,” November 16, 2022.

White House, “Biden-Harris Administration Continues to Accelerate Environmental Justice in Disadvantaged Communities through the President’s Investing in America Agenda,” November 29, 2023.

← IMPACT →

Justice40 established the first whole-of-government commitment to delivering results for Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) and ensuring a more equitable distribution of benefits for many federal programs. It holds the potential to bring meaningful protections to these communities, foster climate resilience, and ensure a Just Transition.

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)²⁰

National

106 Million

Beneficiaries (People)

\$40 Billion

Funding

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was signed into law by President Biden on August 16, 2022. The majority of the law's spending is directed to the climate and energy sectors, but the legislation also makes consequential changes to corporate tax law and improvements to Medicare. A section-by-section analysis of the IRA conducted by Just Solutions found that a total of \$40 billion is intended to benefit environmental justice and low-income communities, including \$27 Billion in direct appropriations.

Beneficiaries

Nearly 106 million people living in over 26,000 "Disadvantaged Community" census tracts, as defined by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST).

Benefits

- An anticipated 37-43% reduction (from 2005 levels) in greenhouse gas emissions, compared to a 25% reduction in a business-as-usual scenario
- Increased capacity of DACs to participate in a Just Transition to a clean energy economy
- Affordable, clean energy for households across the country
- Investments in creating a clean energy workforce

²⁰ Public Law 117-169, August 16, 2022; Just Solutions, "IRA: Our Analysis of the Inflation Reduction Act," October 4, 2022; Energy Innovation Policy & Technology LLC, "Updated Inflation Reduction Act Modeling using the Energy Policy Simulator," August 2022.

← IMPACT →

The IRA is the first substantial federal climate change legislation to have been enacted. It has been lauded as the most significant piece of climate legislation in the history of the United States, including historic investments in climate and clean energy.

Conclusion



The policy achievements showcased above would not have been possible without the years of organizing and advocacy from frontline, environmental justice, and justice-centered organizations, including key leadership from TSP grantee partners. From our analysis, these 20 policy achievements add to our broader understanding of climate policy innovations taking shape within frontline communities. The leadership of these communities in the climate justice movement is resulting in the enactment of policy at the local, state, and federal levels. This impact is seen and felt across the country, and all sectors of work, including energy, housing, and health. These policy models reflect a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the health and welfare of community members. Community advocates follow these policy achievements with years of implementation and accountability efforts, defense of victories, and further innovations that together build durable power for climate justice. The climate solutions presented here demonstrate why it is imperative that those on the frontlines of climate impacts are positioned and effectively resourced to lead the movement and drive decision making.

Given the scale of the climate challenges we face, we must do more and act more quickly. Frontline communities have the lived experience, the knowledge, and the expertise to bring about meaningful, systemic change in a way that moves everyone towards a better climate future. We can expedite solutions if we invest to increase the capacity of groups on the ground to develop solutions, to do the work necessary to analyze, replicate, and scale these solutions, and to create a climate that fosters public policy innovations at all levels. To address both the opportunities and challenges of this moment, environmental justice and climate justice leaders need long-term and transformational levels of support and resources to build and sustain movement-wide policy capacity and power.

