

## SUPPORT CLEAN ENERGY WORKERS

### The Problem

Nearly 430,000 clean energy workers are out of work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, clean energy was one of the fastest-growing sectors in the economy, employing more than 3 million workers. Growth in wind and solar power and energy efficiency has been supporting more and more working families, while promoting cleaner air and water and slashing climate pollution. However, the COVID crisis has brought hardship to many clean energy workers, as made clear in an [analysis](#) by E2: “Energy efficiency workers are losing their jobs after being shut out of homes and buildings to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Solar and wind turbine companies are laying off workers as they’re unable to access panels and parts stranded in shut-down factories and as financing disappears.” To tackle this crisis, clean energy workers need economic investment.

### The Solution

We urgently need to support clean energy workers by investing in the transition to a 100% clean energy economy. That means expanding tax incentives for wind, solar, battery storage, and other clean energy industries. It means extending loans and grants to launch new renewable energy projects, to connect remote sources of wind and solar to our electricity grid, and to modernize the grid for reductions in energy costs and climate pollution. While supporting jobs for hundreds of thousands of clean energy workers, we also could hire unemployed oil and gas workers to close orphaned and leaking oil and gas wells — a win-win for working families and our climate.

### The Jobs

Investments in clean, renewable energy programs would provide good jobs for hundreds of thousands of workers. Specifically, Congress should:

- **Provide nearly 100,000 jobs by extending clean energy tax credits:** Congress needs to invest \$41.5 billion over five years to extend tax credits for wind, solar, battery storage, energy efficiency, and other clean energy sectors, helping to put nearly 100,000 clean energy workers back to work. To further support clean energy, existing tax credits should be made refundable and construction and safe harbor deadlines should be extended.



- **Provide over 50,000 jobs by investing in rural access to clean, renewable energy:** Congress needs to invest at least \$50 billion over 10 years in rural electric cooperatives via existing programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These investments would help rural communities to pursue democratic, cooperative ownership of clean renewable energy generation, transmission, storage, and distribution; energy efficiency upgrades; and electrification projects.
- **Provide over 190,000 jobs by closing orphaned oil and gas wells:** Congress needs to invest \$60 billion over five years to close over 3 million orphaned and leaking oil and gas wells, relieving a burden that currently falls largely on states. This investment would support unemployed workers in the oil and gas industry while reducing pollution.

### And More ...

For a complete list of clean energy investments, see [economic analysis from the Political Economy Research Institute](#) and [Sierra Club's letter to Congress](#), which outlines specific priorities for a bold stimulus package that puts millions of people back to work to build a healthier, more equitable clean energy economy.