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Contact:

Kristiana Faddoul, Sierra Club, kristiana.faddoul@sierraclub.org
Sandy Bahr, Sierra Club, (602) 999-5790, sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org

Arizona Local Climate, Justice, and Interfaith Groups Tell Senators: Invest in Bold Climate Action Now

As Congress Revises the Build Back Better Act, Arizona Communities Urge Adoption of Full \$3.5 Trillion Infrastructure Bill to Invest in Clean Energy, Transportation, and Protection of Natural Resources

Phoenix, AZ -- Today, leaders from local organizations rooted in clean energy, environmental justice, voter rights, and interfaith advocacy hand delivered a large photo petition and thousands of individual petition signatures to the offices of Senator Krysten Sinema and Senator Mark Kelly, asking for their support of the full Build Back Better Budget.

This \$3.5 trillion budget reconciliation bill will improve Arizona's transit systems and provide clean electric school buses to ensure that children are not breathing the dirty diesel exhaust, promote clean energy like solar and wind, invest in restoring and protecting the state's public lands, and provide opportunities for Arizona youth to get involved through the Civilian Climate Corps.

Arizonans grapple with the impacts of climate change daily, seeing worsening drought and extreme heat, which has life-and-death consequences for many people. Emissions from dirty energy sources pollute the air, and harm low-income communities and people of color first and worst. And incredibly, many schools around the state still have lead pipes making water dangerous for children to drink. Arizona communities need Sen. Sinema and Sen. Kelly to understand that investing in a clean energy future is essential to meeting the state's climate goals, and the Build Back Better Budget is the best policy to make it happen.

[Read the petition to Sen. Sinema and Sen. Kelly here](#)

View live-streamed videos of the petition drop/press conferences here:

<https://www.facebook.com/sierraclubaz>

"We need Senator Sinema and Senator Kelly to support all of the programs funded by the Build Back Better Act so we can begin to meet the science-based goals to address climate change and help Arizona avoid even worse drought and extreme heat," **said Sandy Bahr, Chapter Director of Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter.** "We must act as soon as possible and

simply cannot afford cuts to these clean energy investments. Not acting on climate is the most costly thing we can do.”

“As a person of faith, I recognize the importance of protecting the most vulnerable; Pope Francis reminds us to take care of them as well. He says ‘Climate Change is a problem which can no longer be left to future generations. When it comes to the care of our common home, we are living at a critical moment in history,’” **said Columba Sainz with Moms Clean Air Force.** “Low-income communities and communities of color are the most affected by air pollution. My family and I had to move six times already in search of a safer space to raise our family. Latinos are more likely to live in areas with high levels of hazardous air pollution, including areas near high-traffic zones and highways. With 10% of Arizona’s children suffering from asthma, clean energy is not just a matter of protecting our climate but also a matter of protecting our kids. We need our leaders in Washington to prioritize the investments and bold action we need to tackle the Climate Crisis.”

“I have lived my life in Phoenix, Arizona, and I have seen the environmental injustices that the communities of color and low wealth communities have to live with,” **said Ulisses Correa, Environmental Justice Organizer with Mi Familia Vota.** “They are hit first and worst by pollution and suffer severe health and economic impacts, which wealth inequality only exacerbates. I ask our senators to act now on climate.”

“Bold action on climate is a moral imperative,” **said Rev. Doug Bland, Director at Arizona Interfaith Power & Light.** “It is the responsibility of our nation, and our sacred task as people of faith and conscience, to work for environmental justice. Our scriptures demand that we ‘choose life so that you and your children may live’ (Deuteronomy 30:19). Faith leaders around the world urge us to ‘hear the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.’”

“We need bold action on climate and we need Sen. Kelly and Sen. Sinema to be the leaders we elected them to be,” **said Alex Ross with Defend Our Future.** “The future and health of our communities depends on the investments we make now. Investments like the Civilian Climate Corps will help us meet the challenges of the clean energy transition and preserve our public lands.”

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Sierra Club is one of the largest and most influential grassroots environmental organizations in the U.S., with more than 3.5 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person’s right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. Learn more about the Grand Canyon Chapter at <https://www.sierraclub.org/arizona>.

Moms’s Clean Air Force strives to protect children from air pollution and climate change. We envision a safe, stable, and equitable future where all children breathe clean air. We fight for Justice in Every Breath, recognizing the importance of equitable solutions in addressing air pollution and climate change.

Mi Familia Vota's mission is to build Latino political power by expanding the electorate, strengthening local infrastructures, and through year-round voter engagement. We are also training the next generation of leaders by opening opportunities through our Youth Development Programs and through our Mi Familia Vota work. We are strategically located in states with some of the highest Latino population counts, but have worked to identify and serve communities where Latino participation in the electoral process is lacking. We advocate year-round on critically important issues that affect our community in the fields of immigration, voting rights, the environment, workers' rights, education, and health care.

Arizona Interfaith Power & Light is an interfaith, nonpartisan, spiritual response to the climate crisis. We partner with AZ mosques, synagogues, churches and other houses of worship to be better stewards of God's Creation. We work for environmental justices and clean energy. We seek to heal the broken relationships between human beings and the rest of the natural world.

Defend Our Future, a project of the Environmental Defense Fund, is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to empowering young people of all political persuasions who are interested in advancing environmental justice, clean energy and climate solutions that grow our economy and protect the world for future generations.