**Testimony in Support of a Just Transition in the CLCPA Scoping Plan**

My name is Francesca Rheannon and I live in East Hampton, New York. I am co-chair of the Long Island chapter of the Climate Reality Project and am a town-appointed member of the East Hampton Energy and Sustainability Advisory Committee.

As a resident of East Hampton, I live in a community on the front lines of the climate catastrophe. On Long Island, regions like the East End [will become archipelagos](https://www.27east.com/east-hampton-press/development-shifts-montauk-levee-among-suggested-responses-in-report-to-sea-level-rise-1936519/chrome-extension%3A/efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https%3A/ehamptonny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/12557/TOEH_CARP_April22---DRAFT) as low-lying areas, including roads, become permanently submerged under rising seas. [Saltwater intrusion into aquifers will render water supplies undrinkable](https://www.usgs.gov/centers/new-york-water-science-center/science/long-island-groundwater-system-potential-hazards). [More hurricanes of heightened intensity will demolish entire communities](http://www.ehamptonny.gov/574/Coastal-Assessment-Resiliency-Plan). Long Island’s [renowned pine barrens are already being decimated by the northward spread of the southern pine beetle](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/spbccearticle2.pdf). Scallop harvests are [already seeing 98% drops in yield](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/07/nyregion/peconic-bay-scallop-season.html); ocean acidification from carbon pollution will likely wipe out other shellfish populations, as well. The region is already home to some of the [highest populations of disease-carrying ticks in the nation](https://www.fox5ny.com/video/588525), as warmer winters allow the deadly insects to proliferate unchecked; tick-borne [diseases are already epidemic](https://www.newsday.com/news/health/lone-star-tick-sbu-a43967).

I know that without a Just Transition for workers in the fossil fuel sector and disadvantaged communities, New York will never be able to develop the political will to do what is necessary to implement the mandates of the CLCPA. The State has an obligation to treat mandates put forth by the CLCPA and the Climate Action Council as legally enforceable.

To support industry compliance and regulatory enforcement, the Final Scoping Plan should include sector-specific timelines for emissions reduction. Without these safeguards in place, we risk our climate legislation becoming meaningless. In order to reach our climate goals under the CLCPA, the State must ensure a just transition for our disadvantaged communities as well as workers, and it must adequately support those who are currently employed in carbon-intensive trades. To that end, the Final Scoping Plan must include protections for existing and new workers as well as pathways to support jobs growth and workforce development.

Our climate goals will not be achieved if we do not fund them or if we leave our disadvantaged communities or workers behind. Therefore, I strongly urge the Climate Action Council to include the following in the Final Scoping Plan:

**Office of Just Transition**

Establish an Office of Just Transition, controlled by the Governor, that would lead a multi-agency response to the challenge of climate change and transitioning to a decarbonized economy. NYSERDA’s $1.5 billion annual budget must be expanded by at least $125 million for a Just Transition Fund that the Office of Just Transition would administer.

The office would develop and deliver training and income support programs for workers impacted by the transition; provide technical assistance and economic development support for businesses and communities to retool for new clean energy activities, products and services; and effectively implement new federal infrastructure funding and incentives as well as state labor policies to ensure high-quality job creation and economic development efforts are maximized.

The office could also administer a public sector loan facility to accelerate investment in clean energy activities. Climate change is a new type of crisis facing the state, and only the governor can provide the multi-agency coordination and direction that is needed to ensure this transition is managed well.

**Worker and Community Assurance Fund**

A Worker and Community Assurance Fund must be established within the New York State budget to provide direct support to workers in fossil fuel-dependent industries as well as communities home to fossil fuel infrastructure. This funding could provide pension support and wage replacement for displaced workers, tax base replacement for local governments and school districts, and energy transition and economic development planning grants for communities.

**Labor Standards**

The State must require strong labor standards on any projects that use State funds or take place on State property, including strengthening existing labor standards under §224-a of the New York Labor Law. Strong labor standards should include: prevailing wage and benefits, project labor agreements, community benefits agreements, local hiring, use of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and, where applicable, labor neutrality agreements.

**Buy NY and best value procurement provisions**

Such provisions would (a) incentivize job creation through the bidding process along the clean energy, clean transportation, and low-carbon supply chains; and (b) encourage and prioritize high-roads employers to compete up through earning extra credit for good job creation and training commitments. These provisions should be recommended alongside additional policies and programs to incentivize employers to bring high-quality union jobs to New York.

Thank you for the hard work that you as the Climate Action Council is doing. I am aware of the onslaught of disinformation being spread by the fossil fuel industry's campaign to destroy the implementation of the CLCPA. Please remain steadfast in your work. The lives, communities and futures of New Yorkers are at stake. As a grandmother, I beg you to think of our children and grandchildren: we must act now to protect them.