



May 15, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol, Room H-232
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
U.S. Capitol, Room H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

As a coalition of the nation's largest labor unions and environmental groups, collectively representing millions of members and supporters, we write to urge you to swiftly move forward an ambitious plan to rebuild and transform America's infrastructure. If done right, such a plan will boost our economy and create millions of jobs, while simultaneously reducing pollution, combating climate change, and strengthening our communities.

We should be leading the world in building the innovative infrastructure systems that will ensure our global competitiveness and security in the 21st century and beyond. Yet, American infrastructure systems are in dire need of modernization. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)'s latest 2017 Report Card for America's Infrastructure gave the nation's infrastructure a grade of "D+," and estimated that getting to a grade of "B" would require a significant federal investment over the next 10 years. Our aging infrastructure is also being battered by hurricanes, extreme weather, and sea level rise.

Our nation must move forward with a robust and ambitious plan to rebuild and transform America's infrastructure. This plan must address all aspects of our infrastructure needs, including the

electric grid, methane leaks in the natural gas distribution sector, surface transportation, industrial infrastructure and advanced manufacturing, water infrastructure, schools, housing, commercial buildings, broadband, and natural infrastructure. Congress must move forward a plan to meet this need, including boosting revenue to support the public sectors' ability to meet this challenge.

BlueGreen Alliance research has found that investing an estimated \$2.2 trillion in the sectors above to improve them from a “D+” grade overall to a “B” grade has the potential to support or create an additional 14.5 million job-years across the U.S. economy, add a cumulative \$1.66 trillion to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over 10 years, and reduce greenhouse gas pollution, versus a business-as-usual approach. Making these smart investments will pay dividends for our environment and communities by reducing air and water pollution—including the emissions driving climate change—reducing the use of materials and chemicals that are hazardous to human health, and making our communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Building infrastructure with future conditions in mind is also smarter and more cost-effective than rebuilding systems that have proven to be vulnerable.

We will accrue these benefits only if we tackle this challenge the right way. To ensure we maximize the benefits of our infrastructure investments for communities, the environment, and workers, any infrastructure package must:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of air and water pollution;
- Ensure all projects built with public resources are subject to Buy America standards that maximize the return to taxpayers, workers and the American economy;
- Enforce Davis-Bacon provisions that ensure workers are paid prevailing wages;
- Utilize project labor agreements (PLAs), community benefit agreements, local hire, and other provisions and practices that prioritize improving training, working conditions, and project benefits, including respect for collective bargaining agreements and workers' organizing rights such as neutrality, majority sign-up, and first contract arbitration;
- Drive forward-looking planning and investments that meet environmental standards and build resilient infrastructure systems and communities, including through natural infrastructure solutions;
- Improve air and water quality and public health;
- Prioritize use of the most efficient, resilient, and cleanest materials and products with the lowest carbon and toxicity footprints;
- Enhance workforce training and development programs to expand the number of skilled workers in new and existing industries;
- Increase pathways to economic opportunities for communities and local workers, especially for people of color and low-income communities;
- Prioritize public funding and financing for infrastructure investment. All financing methods should be held to strong public interest standards;

- Increasing public safety. By modernizing and making needed repairs that can help prevent catastrophic events.

Repairing America's infrastructure systems is both urgently needed and an enormous opportunity; it should be a bipartisan legislative priority in the 116th Congress. We urge you to develop and put forward an infrastructure package that meets the above criteria. We look forward to supporting these efforts and delivering much-needed benefits to American communities.

Sincerely,

Mike Williams
Interim Co-Executive Director
BlueGreen Alliance

Randi Weingarten
President
American Federation of Teachers

Leo W. Gerard
International President
United Steelworkers Union

Mark McManus
General President
United Association of Plumbers and
Pipefitters

Michael Brune
Executive Director
Sierra Club

Joseph Sellers
General President
SMART, the International Association of
Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation
Workers

Rhea Suh
President
Natural Resources Defense Council

Elizabeth Gore
Senior Vice President
Environmental Defense Fund

Chris Shelton
President
Communications Workers of America

James Boland
President
International Union of Bricklayers and Allied
Craftworkers

Collin O'Mara
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Wildlife Federation

Gene Karpinski
President
League of Conservation Voters

Kathleen Rest
Executive Director
Union of Concerned Scientists