



## Overview

Climate change impacts everyone. But because human societies are unequal, climate change does not impact everyone in the same way. For example, low-income communities have fewer resources to recover from climate disasters. In the United States, communities of color bear the brunt of pollution associated with fossil fuels and energy infrastructure. Worldwide, climate change has a disproportionate impact on women and children. Both in the U.S. and worldwide, individuals and communities that contributed the least to the climate crisis will face the greatest impacts. Because climate change amplifies existing injustices, policies to address climate change should be designed to mitigate inequality and disproportionate impacts. To advance climate justice, state legislation needs to identify and center environmental justice communities, build an inclusive economy, support community-driven solutions, require local pollution reductions, and facilitate a just transition.

## Legislation (\*\*\*) indicates bipartisan support)

- **Illinois S.B.2132/H.B.3624 (2021)**: Invested up to \$40 million per year to replace lost property taxes, and support economic development and job training; created a “bill of rights” for displaced workers and provided them with services and training.
- **Maine L.D.2018 (2022)**: Established definitions for “environmental justice” and “front line communities;” set methods to incorporate the weighing of equity decisions in deliberations at the state’s Department of Environmental Protection and the Public Utilities Commission.
- **Connecticut S.B.999 (2021)**: Set guidelines and requirements for renewable energy projects to incorporate community benefit agreements, apprenticeship programs, prevailing wage, and project labor agreements.
- **Maryland H.B.1200 (2022)**: Required a person applying for a certain permit from the Department of the Environment to include in the application the EJ Score from the Maryland EJ tool for the census tract where the applicant is seeking the permit.
- **Washington S.5489 (2021)**: Created a community engagement plan that describes engagement with overburdened communities and vulnerable populations as new and existing activities and programs are evaluated, including facilitation of equitable participation and support of meaningful and direct involvement.

## KEY POINTS

- Climate change worsens environmental conditions associated with chronic illness and injury and causes social and economic dislocations that most impact disadvantaged communities ([Public Health Institute](#)).
- Black Americans are 40% more likely to currently live in areas with the highest projected increases in extreme temperature related deaths ([EPA](#)).
- People in low-and lower-middle-income countries are around five times more likely than people in high-income countries to be displaced by extreme weather disasters ([Oxfam](#)).
- Programs by the Federal Emergency Management Agency “provide an additional boost to wealthy homeowners and others with less need, while lower-income individuals and others sink further into poverty after disasters” ([FEMA National Advisory Council](#)).

## Other Resources

- Green New Deal Resource Hub ([Global Center for Climate Justice](#))
- Guide to Equitable, Community-Driven Climate Preparedness Planning ([Urban Sustainability Directors Network](#))
- Solutions Library ([Just Solutions Network](#))
- Make Polluters Pay ([Green for All](#))
- Making Equity Real in Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience Policies and Programs: A Guidebook ([Georgetown Climate Center](#))
- State-Based Policies to Build a Cleaner, Safer, More Equitable Economy ([Blue Green Alliance](#))
- Tools to Help Plan For and Fund a Just Equitable Transition From Fossil Fuel Power Plants and Mining ([Just and Equitable Transition Coalition](#))

