



Positive climate action comes at a cost to frontline communities  
*How the Inflation Reduction Act may impact climate resilience and water equity*

While a significant investment in the United States' clean energy future, the Inflation Reduction and Jobs Act also paves the way for new offshore drilling and oil pipelines that fuel further climate change while threatening the health and safety of communities facing flooding, fire and drought. This hard-fought compromise reflects **our national approach to climate policy that has long focused on incrementally reducing emissions without centering environmental and economic justice.**

The package includes positive climate action...

- On water, there will be billions of dollars to help farmers reduce water use and pollution, and more than \$4 billion dollars toward safe water access in the West for communities and Tribes facing water insecurity as drought and overuse drain rivers, reservoirs and underground aquifers. The bill also provides \$2.6 billion to FEMA to help coastal communities prepare for extreme storms and climate change.
- On clean energy, the bill contains billions of dollars for the manufacturing and deployment of clean energy technology, efficiency and electrification; direct rebates for consumers; and funding for energy and water efficiency in affordable housing.
- On environmental justice, the bill would cut the pollution that disproportionately impacts predominantly Black and brown, low-income communities, with \$47 billion in environmental justice initiatives that will clearly benefit frontline communities.

But at what cost and at whose expense?

- The concessions made to get a climate bill in place do so by endangering communities living in the shadow of mining, drilling, moving and burning fossil fuels, including those in the Gulf South and Alaska. The bill requires the Department of Interior to put millions of acres of public lands and waters up for oil and gas leasing before the agency can grant access or sell leases to renewable energy projects.
- As part of the deal, Congressional leadership agreed on separate legislation that will, if passed, make it easier to approve polluting fossil fuel project permits and [undermine the National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#), a critical tool for communities of color and low-income communities to fight dirty energy and other polluting industries.

- The bill includes giveaways to polluters like carbon capture and sequestration instead of focusing investment on a just transition away from the fossil fuel economy. Emissions reductions projections don't account for future fossil fuel extraction or rely on false solutions like CCS that are unproven and likely to keep polluting power plants open longer.

The legislation is available for review [here](#). Climate Justice Alliance has a more exhaustive environmental justice breakdown of the bill's provisions [here](#).

**About the [Water Equity and Climate Resilience Caucus](#)**

The WECR Caucus is a national network of organizations centering frontline communities of color and low-income communities in working to achieve water equity and climate justice. It is co-chaired by [PolicyLink](#) and [Taproot Earth](#) (formerly Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy).