



July 15, 2022

The Honorable Joe Manchin, III
United States Senator
306 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Manchin,

The West Virginia Climate Alliance is writing to you with great disappointment on the continued delay to take action to address the climate crisis.

Climate change is a crisis of today - in the last week alone, West Virginia communities in McDowell County have faced devastating impacts due to flooding exacerbated by climate change. There are enormous human and economic costs that West Virginians already bear due to your lack of action on this defining issue of our time.

Beyond our own borders, the U.S. has sustained [332 weather and climate disasters since 1980](#) where overall damages/costs reached or exceeded \$1 billion. The total cost of these 332 events exceeds \$2.275 trillion. Given these destructive and expensive impacts that West Virginians and Americans are already facing, there is an even greater urgency to listen to the science and take swift action to reduce global warming and prevent more costly and dangerous climate disasters.

Just in the past year, new research and science has shown that the time to invest in climate solutions is now to avoid even worse effects of climate change. Reports released earlier in 2022 by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on [climate impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability](#) and on [climate mitigation](#) were a clarion call for immediate and transformational change, transitioning quickly away from burning fossil fuels and adopting clean energy sources. Even the International Energy Agency released an analysis showing there is [no need for new investments in fossil fuel infrastructure](#) in order to reach net zero goals while ensuring energy security.

Despite the dire projections of climate delay and inaction, you have an opportunity to be a national leader to help our nation and people avoid the worst impacts of climate change via congressional action. It continues to be imperative that the United States also provides world leadership in reducing greenhouse gas emissions given the time sensitivity of mitigating climate change.

We are urging you to forge climate legislation that will achieve a 50 percent reduction in the US greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. According to Princeton University, investing \$555 billion into a clean energy transition in the U. S. economy would come close to achieving the 50 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 as well as reducing premature deaths annually by 7,000 and [reducing American household energy expenditures by \\$300 a year by 2030](#).

Additionally, adopting this scale of climate and energy legislation will provide President Biden the moral authority to move China and other countries to adopt substantive measures in order to keep global warming below an increase of 1.5 degrees Celsius, avoiding the worst impacts of climate change.

The Climate Alliance is a broad-based coalition of environmental, faith-based, civil rights, and civic organizations. The mission of the Climate Alliance is to provide public education on evidence-based policies addressing the climate crisis and advocate for environmental justice, a true transition and significant emissions reductions. We are hopeful that we can continue working with you and members of your staff on how Congress can adopt the Energy and Natural Resources Committee's provisions in the upcoming budget reconciliation process and achieve the goal of keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

At this historical moment, as we face a climate tipping point, it is good to reflect on the wisdom of those who came before us. As Martin Luther King Jr., said, "We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action."

The late Senator Byrd said many times that filibustering the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was his biggest regret; the decision troubled him for the rest of his life. We encourage you to deeply consider the broad implications of continued delays to act to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, for your own children and grandchildren, and for all the children and grandchildren in our beautiful mountain state and across the world. The consequences are too severe to delay action.

Sincerely,

WV Climate Alliance

C: Luke Bassett
Zahava Urecki
Mara Boggs