

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1817

To direct the Secretary of Labor to establish a renewable energy transition grant program and to establish a National Employment Corps, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 11, 2021

Mr. DESAULNIER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Labor to establish a renewable energy transition grant program and to establish a National Employment Corps, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Workers
5 for a Clean Future Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The fossil fuel and fossil fuel-dependent in-
9 dustries have been major drivers of employment and

1 economic growth in regions throughout California.
2 Yet, despite the success of these industries, many
3 local residents are unemployed or live in poverty. In
4 addition, nearby communities often suffer from pol-
5 lution, poor air and water quality, and other health
6 hazards. The goal of community transition grants is
7 to develop a vision for a future economy based on
8 equity, sustainability, and shared prosperity. A re-
9 gional approach requires bringing together a diverse
10 set of stakeholders that represent the whole commu-
11 nity. This coalition must be capable of developing
12 and implementing strategies to support workers and
13 communities that will be affected by the transition
14 away from fossil fuels. To be effective, coalitions
15 should work closely with high road employers and in-
16 dustry leaders to identify in-demand skills and work-
17 force strategies that promote emerging and expand-
18 ing sectors of the regional economy.

19 (2) These strategies should provide pathways
20 for impacted workers to transition to other sustain-
21 able jobs and careers. They should also include the
22 frontline communities who have historically been ex-
23 cluded from the economic benefits of the fossil fuel
24 industry, while bearing the greatest costs of pollu-
25 tion and ecological damage.

1 (3) Partnerships should include organizations
2 representing workers and communities impacted by
3 the fossil fuel industry and the transition to a car-
4 bon-constrained economy. Workers, residents, and
5 community leaders have inherent knowledge of re-
6 gional dynamics, issues, and needs, and should func-
7 tion at the center of developing regional solutions.

8 (4) In addition, coalitions should be diverse and
9 represent a wide range of regional interests and
10 stakeholders, including organizations representing
11 labor, environmental justice, industry, economic de-
12 velopment, local tribal and municipal government,
13 and educational institutions.

14 (5) As the United States and global economies
15 shift from fossil fuels to more sustainable sources of
16 energy, the fossil fuel workforce cannot be left be-
17 hind. They must be part of the conversation and
18 have a role in shaping the transition.

19 **SEC. 3. RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSITION GRANT PRO-**
20 **GRAM.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor, in con-
22 sultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall establish a
23 grant program for local governments for the purpose of
24 developing a plan to transition workers from employment

1 in fossil fuel industries to employment in sustainable in-
2 dustries.

3 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary of Labor may
4 award grants under subsection (a) to a local or Tribal gov-
5 ernment that—

6 (1) establishes industry or sector partnerships
7 (as defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation
8 and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102));

9 (2) is in a locality that the Secretary of Energy
10 determines to have a percentage of traditional en-
11 ergy sector jobs that is average or above average rel-
12 ative to the United States; and

13 (3) certifies that such local or Tribal govern-
14 ment will develop the transition plan described in
15 subsection (a) in consultation with relevant State
16 and other experts, including experts in energy labor,
17 green economy policies, and energy policy, and with
18 relevant State officials, if applicable.

19 (c) DETERMINATION OF PERCENTAGE OF TRADI-
20 TIONAL ENERGY SECTOR JOBS.—In making the deter-
21 mination under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary of Labor
22 shall take into consideration information from the report
23 entitled “U.S. Energy and Employment Report” issued by
24 the Secretary in January, 2017.

1 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds under subsection (a)
2 may be used for the following purposes:

3 (1) To develop a transition plan described in
4 subsection (a).

5 (2) To support an existing apprenticeship pro-
6 gram for apprenticeable occupation or, if in a non-
7 traditional industry, to develop an apprenticeship
8 program.

9 (3) To train individuals who are new to the
10 workforce for jobs in sustainable industries, includ-
11 ing but not limited to, manufacturing, autonomous
12 vehicles, electric vehicles, renewable energy,
13 CERCLA remediation, and may include a partner-
14 ship or agreements with employers to provide jobs
15 for trainees.

16 (e) TRANSITION PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—A transi-
17 tion plan funded under subsection (a)—

18 (1) shall include assistance for accessing all ex-
19 isting applicable Federal and State aid for displaced
20 workers, including unemployment insurance, job
21 transition training, and community services for the
22 affected community as well as trade adjustment as-
23 sistance and other programs, if applicable; and

24 (2) may also include assistance to supplement
25 existing Federal and State aid, including funds for

1 bridges to retirement for older workers, wage insur-
2 ance for workers who find employment in lower wage
3 jobs, and funding for significant career change train-
4 ing for workers who wish to change careers, includ-
5 ing case management and career path counseling.

6 (f) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to be ap-
7 propriated such sums as necessary to carry out this sec-
8 tion.

9 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT CORPS.**

10 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within
11 the Department of Labor a National Employment Corps.

12 (b) JOB GUARANTEE GRANTS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—If local government or Tribe
14 described in section 3(b) executes a plan under sec-
15 tion 2 in good faith, but all workers described in sec-
16 tion 3(a) are not successfully transitioned, the Sec-
17 retary of Labor, acting through the National Em-
18 ployment Corps, shall establish a program (herein-
19 after referred to as the “program”) to provide
20 grants to local and Tribal governments to provide di-
21 rect employment projects for the purpose of guaran-
22 teeing a job and job training to any eligible worker
23 not successfully transitioned under such plan.

1 (2) USE OF FUNDS.—The grants under para-
2 graph (1) shall cover wage, benefits, and material
3 expenses of eligible workers.

4 (3) ELIGIBLE WORKER.—In this section, the
5 term “eligible worker” means any individual who
6 loses a job or reasonably anticipates losing a job due
7 to a transition from traditional energy sources to
8 sustainable energy sources.

9 (c) COORDINATION OF FEDERAL EFFORTS.—The
10 Corps shall work with Federal agencies to identify areas
11 of needed investment in the United States economy, in-
12 cluding infrastructure, energy efficiency, retrofitting, elder
13 care, child care, job training, education, and health serv-
14 ices.

15 (d) FEDERAL COMPONENT.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—If projects funded under the
17 program under subsection (b) are inadequate to
18 maintain full employment in the locality or Tribe,
19 the Secretary shall intervene in the locality or Tribe
20 to provide adequate employment opportunities to
21 guarantee employment to workers described in such
22 subsection.

23 (2) ADDITIONAL SERVICES.—The Corps shall
24 also offer the following services to eligible workers:

25 (A) Supportive services.

1 (B) Wrap-around services, including:

2 (i) Transportation.

3 (ii) Childcare.

4 (iii) Job preparation services.

5 (iv) Counseling.

6 (C) Adult education and literacy activities.

7 (D) Activities to assist justice-involved in-
8 dividuals.

9 (3) WEBSITE AND DATABASE.—To assist with
10 an individual's move from the job guarantee to other
11 employment opportunities under a National Employ-
12 ment Corps, the Secretary shall establish a website
13 and database listing individuals employed under the
14 program as available for, and seeking, employment.
15 Individuals shall be allowed up to one day (8 hours)
16 per employed month to seek alternative employment
17 and for professional development.

18 (e) COORDINATION OF LOCAL EFFORTS.—Any local
19 or Tribal government that receives a grant shall develop
20 employment proposals in coordination with community
21 leaders, labor organizations, and local residents to ensure
22 the proposals will serve the needs of the constituents and
23 available pool of labor. The employment proposals may not
24 be used to employ individuals who will replace or speed

1 the displacement of existing employees or individuals who
2 would otherwise perform similar work.

3 (f) EMPLOYMENT PROTECTIONS.—

4 (1) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNITS.—Partici-
5 pants shall be included in an established bargaining
6 unit and covered by any applicable collective bar-
7 gaining agreement upon the establishment of such
8 agreement.

9 (2) WAGES UNDER THE PROGRAM.—Wage vari-
10 ation shall be built into the program, as determined
11 by the Secretary of Labor, to account for workers'
12 previous experience, education, and region of resi-
13 dence, as well as the prospect of promotion within
14 the National Employment Corps.

15 (3) WEBSITE.—To manage projects past,
16 present, and future, the National Employment Corps
17 shall create a website where all projects will be list-
18 ed.

19 (4) MINIMUM WAGE.—Any individual employed
20 using funds under this section shall be paid wages
21 at a rate that is not less than \$15.00 per hour and
22 that are comparable wages in the region, plus bene-
23 fits, and indexed for inflation.

24 (g) APPRENTICESHIP DEFINED.—In this section, the
25 term “apprenticeship” means an apprenticeship program

1 registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly
2 known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”) (50 Stat.
3 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.), including any
4 requirement, standard, or rule promulgated under such
5 Act, as such requirement, standard, or rule was in effect
6 on December 30, 2019.

○