

## RESOLUTION 10

# Creating and Retaining Sustainable Good Green Jobs

Submitted by the Executive Council  
Referred to the Legislation and Policy Committee

**ADDRESSING GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE,** protecting our environment and achieving energy independence are critical to the economic, environmental and security interests of the United States. America must lead a technological revolution in the way energy is generated and used with massive investments in new labor-enhancing technologies and energy efficiency. But a new industrial policy—an environmental economic development policy—is needed to guarantee that these investments are made in the United States and that they result in good sustainable union jobs here at home.

Workers in America and across the world recognize the risks inherent in climate change, but we also share a bold vision for a cleaner environment that carries the promise of millions of good green jobs and a revival of the middle class and domestic manufacturing. The trade union movement wants an environmental economic development strategy that achieves a just transition to a greener economy.

A just transition to a greener economy requires an aggressive sustained commitment of national resources to create and retain good union jobs in the United States, increase per capita income, modernize industry, develop and deploy technology and educate and train current and future workers. It requires assistance for any workers, families or communities that may be adversely affected by the transition, and a democratic voice for workers in their workplaces and in their communities.

Already the AFL-CIO has played a leading role in laying out a new greener and more sustainable direction for our country by promoting infrastructure and green investments in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and in climate legislation now being considered by Congress. The federation has supported a diverse, sustainable energy infrastructure that retains current generating options, including fossil fuels, nuclear, hydro and renewable energy. We have supported greater funding for R&D in a variety of technologies like materials sciences for manufacturing and alternative fuels development for the aviation transportation sector. While supporting investments in advanced coal and automotive technology, mass transit, renewable energy, biofuels, grid modernization, energy efficiency, weatherization and retrofits, we have fought for wage and employment standards and training resources. And recently the AFL-CIO created the Green Jobs Center at the Working for America Institute to expand our efforts to ensure that green jobs are good jobs and to assist unions in advocating for green workplaces.

We know that new public investment in new green technologies and energy efficiency has tremendous potential to create jobs. The Obama administration, the Apollo Alliance and others have estimated that every \$100 billion of investment in these areas creates 1 million jobs. The annual international market for environmental products and services is projected to double from \$1.37 trillion to \$2.74 trillion by

2020, with energy efficiency accounting for half of this market and sustainable transport, water supply, sanitation and waste management accounting for the rest. Sectoral studies, such as the "Manufacturing Climate Solutions" series sponsored by AFL-CIO unions and the Environmental Defense Fund, demonstrate how specific clean/green technologies such as high-performance windows, auxiliary power units, LED lighting and concentrated solar thermal power contribute to job creation. An affiliate-supported study by BBC Research shows that construction of 20 gigawatts of advanced coal capacity would require approximately 500,000 direct job-years of labor. In addition to coal plants with CO<sub>2</sub> capture, new nuclear generation also will be a necessary component of our electrical energy portfolio. Nuclear power is the only existing base-load generation technology that does not produce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Using green technology, deploying advanced coal technology, modernizing the electric grid and building a new generation of nuclear power plants can create substantial long-term employment in manufacturing and construction if we make certain that the domestic U.S. supply chain produces the wire, steel, pipes and nuclear vessels that will be needed. Experience also shows that environmental remediation of superfund and brownfield manufacturing sites creates jobs and restores the productive capacity of these properties, resulting in smart growth that builds upon existing infrastructure.

We must support our transportation system so it can serve to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and, where needed, help convert certain transportation sectors to cleaner technologies. Public transportation and freight and passenger rail offer an excellent opportunity to move people and goods more efficiently while promoting good jobs. Through implementation of air traffic control modernization, aircraft can fly more efficiently and thus burn less fuel. More efficient seaports will mean less idling for both vessels and vehicles, cutting pollution output in environmentally sensitive areas. Investing in roads and highways

will reduce congestion and traffic chokepoints. Moreover, investing in the greening of domestic transportation will preserve and provide good jobs here in the United States.

It matters where things are made, and new investments in a sustainable energy infrastructure must be structured to create good jobs here in the United States. Three decades ago, the United States led the world in renewable energy technology, but today too many of our energy investments create jobs in other countries. The United States is home to only two of the 10 largest solar photovoltaic producers, one of the top 10 advanced battery manufacturers and two of the top 10 wind turbine producers. Last year, less than half of the record 8,300 megawatts of wind turbines installed in the United States were made in this country.

In 2008, the United States ran an overall green trade deficit of \$8.9 billion, including a deficit of \$6.4 billion in the critical category of renewable energy. Our immediate goal must be to convert this trade deficit into a trade surplus.

To ensure that public investments result in the creation of good green jobs here in the United States:

- Congress must make an aggressive sustained commitment of resources to fund the energy and environmental transition of our nation. We must fund new technology, energy efficiency and the research and development that enables industries such as the aviation transportation and manufacturing sectors to transition while also assuring that these global energy price sensitive industries remain competitive. In addition, Congress must assure that R&D investments resulting in new products or technology also lead to domestic investments that create good jobs.
- Congress must enforce and strengthen Buy American and other domestic investment requirements for federal procurement and

grants to states and local governments. This commitment includes tightening domestic content thresholds, requiring waiver transparency, limiting available waivers, expanding product coverage to all manufactured goods and raw materials, prohibiting project segmentation and mandating common-sense standards for product substitutability.

- Congress must enact other forms of investment criteria for public resources not covered by Buy American and related laws. For example, criteria used in earlier proposed climate legislation for the award of financial incentives to targeted manufacturers included: (1) use of domestically produced parts and components, (2) return of idle manufacturing capacity to productive service, and (3) location in states with the highest number of unemployed manufacturing workers. The use of Buy American, related regulations and domestic investment criteria can be a powerful incentive for government and industry to be more strategic in the targeting of public investments.
- Congress and the administration must adopt a manufacturing strategy that targets resources to revitalize our manufacturing base in the industrial heartland and utilizes the existing pool of skilled workers, engineering talent and idled capacity. Our energy and mass transit resources are currently spread so widely that it is difficult to maximize the potential impact of these investments. Currently there are no rules, guidance or incentives in place to ensure a more strategic approach. The federal government must encourage regional and national collaboration to achieve the following goals: common designs, system comparability and attracting the world's best technology. Our combined financial resources should be used to build new industries by leveraging private capital, international technology and to establish the entire production systems here.
- Retooling the U.S. auto industry to accelerate domestic production of advanced-technology

and alternative-fuel vehicles and their key components will also create jobs in the United States. Currently, many advanced-technology vehicles are assembled overseas, and virtually all key components are built abroad. The role of a revitalized auto industry producing energy-efficient cars is critical not only to the revival of the U.S. manufacturing base, but also to U.S. energy independence and to reduction of carbon emissions.

- Long-term investment in mass transit is crucial to reducing carbon emissions, enhancing workers' transportation options and creating good jobs. Increasing domestic production of transportation equipment could be an enormous boost to our manufacturing sector.

The challenge of ensuring that domestic public investment creates jobs in the United States goes hand in hand with the challenge of ensuring that the jobs created by these investments are good jobs. Not all green jobs are good jobs. Good Jobs First reports that low pay is not uncommon in emerging environmental sectors of the economy. For example, home weatherization is an industry characterized by low wages, no benefits, little training and lack of standards. Wage rates at many wind and solar manufacturing facilities are below national averages for manufacturing, and few workers in these plants belong to unions.

To ensure that green jobs are good jobs:

- Congress must establish contracting and procurement criteria to ensure that contractors and subcontractors on federally funded and assisted construction projects adhere to prevailing wage requirements and provide apprenticeship training programs, employer-paid health care, employer-paid pensions, worker safety programs and local community outreach to facilitate employment opportunities.
- Congress must establish similar criteria for manufacturing contractors and subcontractors to require them to provide full health and

retirement benefits, pay wages equal to at least 100 percent of a state's average manufacturing wage and provide quality training through labor-management partnerships, on-the-job training, skills training or other employer-based training.

- Criteria for the selection of contractors and recipients of federal funding must include compliance with existing federal laws, including all applicable labor and affirmative action laws, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, environmental laws and anti-discrimination laws. Recipients of federal funding should be required to remain neutral in union organizing campaigns. Congress must guarantee that workers whose salaries are paid in whole or in part with public funds have free choice to form unions and bargain collectively and must enforce legal protections for workers' wages and benefits.
- Congress must fully fund high-quality training programs such as the Green Jobs Act of 2007 and its competitive grant program for job training that leads to economic self-sufficiency in energy technology, efficiency and manufacturing. The Green Jobs Act authorized funding for training programs that ensure high-quality training with access to occupations with career ladders and employment opportunities for residents of local communities.
- Congress must guarantee that excellent long-term assistance is readily available to workers and communities adversely affected by climate legislation. Transition assistance must include up to three years of wage and health care benefits, enhanced training, education and counseling, family assistance and support and community planning.
- Congress must establish an oversight process with accountability measures to prevent noncompliance with these criteria and employer requirements, along with public access (through the Internet) to this information. The Government Accountability

Office should be directed to report to Congress regularly on outcomes relating to domestic investment, domestic employment and wages and benefits. Congress should also establish a "claw-back" mechanism to force contractors that willfully violate the law to disgorge all or part of the federal assistance they have received.

- State and local governments must support and help enforce federal domestic investment requirements. They should also establish and enforce their own domestic procurement and investment criteria. States and local governments should have an aggressive strategy to utilize public resources to attract private investment in new technology and energy efficiency, backed by good job standards. States and local governments that attach strong enforceable labor standards to economic development investments pay the highest average wages.
- State and local governments also support good jobs that can and should be green jobs. State and local government employees have a critical role to play in the transition to a green economy—through increasing energy efficiency in public structures, ensuring the safety and purity of the air we breathe and the water we drink, or operating and maintaining a transportation system that carries us into the future. Public employers must work with their unions to ensure these employees have the skills and the opportunity to take part in this transition.
- Unions must also take responsibility for driving a good union jobs strategy at every level of government, with employers, in the workplace and with the public and private investment communities. Union members and employers have a direct stake in green workplaces that use energy cleanly and efficiently. Unions are a critical stakeholder in promoting partnerships with community allies for training and access to jobs, and for demanding strategic public

investment that leverages private capital to create good jobs. State and local labor councils and their affiliates should help enforce federal domestic investment criteria and support local versions of these criteria and job standards. The AFL-CIO will work with our network of state and local labor councils to strengthen efforts to coordinate and share information on policy, strategy, experience and union expertise.

- The AFL-CIO will also continue to work with our affiliates to drive environmental, energy and infrastructure legislation with investments and standards that lead to good green jobs. The federation's Office of Investment will work on sustainable investment policies with our affiliates and the investment community to encourage public and private strategic partnerships with government in attracting new industry and green construction. The Green Jobs Center at the Working for America Institute will coordinate the many initiatives of the federation and its affiliates, create the resources and materials to support that work, inventory and support workforce development programs that support green jobs and help create pipelines that place workers in union jobs.

The Green Jobs Center and the National Labor College (NLC) will work with our affiliates to develop related core criteria for NLC degree programs and a union training program for green workplace representatives. The programs will provide training and materials for union members on facilitating the conversion of individual workplaces to sustainable environments that save energy, reduce the

production of waste, use environmentally friendly products, recycle materials, maintain employee health and adopt other practices, technologies and high-performance work processes that reduce carbon emissions while retaining good jobs at family-sustaining wages.

- The AFL-CIO also remains committed to working internationally with our affiliates and the International Trade Union Confederation in support of a climate agreement that provides for a just transition. The federation and the ITUC share a common vision for an agreement that is democratic, union empowered, creates and retains good jobs, modernizes industry, develops and deploys technology, builds skills and assists workers and communities.
- The production, transportation and distribution of electrical energy are critical to the success of the U.S. economy, and reliable affordable electrical energy is the lifeblood of the manufacturing, transportation, construction and service industries. New investments in a sustainable energy infrastructure must be structured to create good jobs, ensure stable energy prices and be supported by effective trade policies.

America has a historic opportunity for domestic investment in new technology and energy efficiency that will save jobs, create new jobs and new industries and revitalize U.S. manufacturing and the middle class. The unions of the AFL-CIO are committed to leading the fight to guarantee that these jobs will be good jobs and that these investments will be made here in the United States.