

## **Joint Statement of the Louisiana Policy Table of Gulf South for a Green New Deal on the Louisiana Climate Action Plan**

The Louisiana Climate Action Plan (“LCAP”), the final product of the Governor’s Climate Initiatives Task Force, contains recommendations that could potentially set Louisiana on a path to meeting the goal of net zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050. Key measures in the plan include:

- Rapid, renewably-generated electrification of the industrial sector
- Enforcement of a Net Zero Industry Standard, including efforts to align permitting of new facilities with the aim of reducing GHG emissions;
- investment in renewably-fueled mass transit running; and
- widespread deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy, particularly through the adoption of a Renewable Portfolio Standard (“RPS”) mandating these technologies.

However, the LCAP has significant limitations: it is not, in fact, a plan, but rather an unprioritized list of recommendations that provides no analysis of the relative greenhouse gas emissions reductions of the measures included. Furthermore, the LCAP fails to include permitting limits that would apply to the emissions of industrial facilities likely to be constructed in the near future. The listed measures also rely heavily on industry-promoted technologies proven to increase rather than decrease GHG, such as carbon capture and sequestration, blue hydrogen, and emissions offset schemes. These false steps will not reduce emissions locally, but will allow industry to continue poisoning both individual bodies and beloved communities in our state. As the Climate Initiatives Task Force’s own data shows, an astounding 66% of greenhouse gas emissions in Louisiana come from industry (compared to 17% nationally), yet this set of recommendations assumes that industrial expansion - and therefore industrial emissions (carbon and otherwise) - will continue unabated.

It is not a certainty that we will actually deploy this plan, much less achieve the goal at hand of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, within the next 28 years. Mitigating against climate change and reducing harms to Louisiana and its people will require the coordinated efforts of state agencies at all levels - executive, legislative, and regulatory. We point especially to the Louisiana Legislature, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the Louisiana

Department of Natural Resources, and the Louisiana Public Service Commission as bodies that will have the responsibility of implementing these recommendations. To say that the future habitability of this state depends on the success of this plan is not an understatement, as the blue-tarped rooftops stretching from Houma to Lake Charles attest.

This report must not be an end in itself, but rather, we must treat it as a blueprint for action. Mere talk is not enough. Success can be achieved in a number of ways, which would improve on the LCAP as published:

1. While the LCAP makes reference to engaging with federally-recognized tribal nations and learning from indigenous stewardship practices, it makes no mention of the word “sovereignty” and includes no recommendations for the return of land to tribal nations or the formal engagement of state-recognized tribes in the implementation of the state’s climate plans. Indigenous stewardship must include control of land and its resources by tribal nations, many of which are affected disproportionately by climate change and threatened with displacement.
2. The LCAP makes no plan for how to implement any of the included actions, which are strictly voluntary suggestions. The Climate Initiatives Task Force and its subcommittee members should endeavor to continue their work in the longer term to ensure some mechanism of accountability for the actual implementation and adoption of these recommendations.
3. Implementation must include establishment and adherence to Equity standards rooted in strengthening Louisiana's communities.

More than a century of economic dependence on the fossil fuel and petrochemical industries has left the people of Louisiana woefully unprepared for the climate disaster that is already a regular part of our lives. Louisiana does not have time for further inaction on climate, and half-measures are useless in this fight. The good news is, if we do take action, Louisianans will have cleaner air, better health, greater safety, and a more stable economy. We need leaders with the wisdom to act swiftly, the vision to see through false solutions, and the courage to wrest the future of this state from the vise grip of industry.

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