



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

**CLARE E. CONNORS**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

For Immediate Release  
September 17, 2021

News Release 2021-52

### **Hawaii Attorney General Connors Joins Coalition Calling on Congress to Prioritize Funding for Programs to Address the Climate Crisis, Environmental Injustice**

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors joined a coalition of 20 state attorneys general urging Congress to respond to the climate crisis and advance environmental justice by funding critical programs in budget reconciliation legislation. In a letter to Democratic Congressional leaders, the coalition, led by New York Attorney General Letitia James, calls on Congress to pass infrastructure legislation and to allocate funding in the upcoming reconciliation bill that addresses the rapid transition to a clean energy economy, climate change, and the environmental injustices faced by low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal and indigenous communities. The coalition urges Congress to fund actions that will substantially cut greenhouse gases—thereby preventing more dire climate change harms—and confront longstanding environmental injustice.

“We are at a critical moment, where action must be taken to mitigate the harmful effects of climate change, promote clean, renewable energy production and address the inequitable impact certain communities suffer from increasingly deadly climate-related events,” said Attorney General Connors. “Funding programs that address these issues will be a positive step forward.”

All Americans deserve an equal right to clean air, clean water, and a safe and healthy environment. However, low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal and indigenous communities are too often denied these rights, enduring disproportionate burdens of pollution, climate change, or other serious health and environmental harms. Those harms are only becoming more severe, as witnessed by the catastrophic storms and wildfires experienced this summer. The coalition argues that Congress should address the climate emergency by prioritizing investment in the following specific areas that – while broadly beneficial to improving the lives of all Americans – are critical steps in ending the legacy of inequity that afflicts marginalized and underserved communities:

- Ensure substantial additional funding to reduce climate change pollution at its source and foster climate resilience;

- Improve critical quality water and drinking water services, including providing adequate funding to ensure that all lead service lines are replaced;
- Invest in air quality monitoring in at-risk communities;
- Address methane pollution;
- Increase access to and investment in clean energy, including enacting the proposed Clean Energy Payment Program;
- Fund energy efficiency programs for schools and affordable housing;
- Accelerate the electrification of transportation and goods movement; and
- Support programs that advance workforce development and pollution reduction and improve the health of our communities.

Additionally, the coalition contends that in order for the Biden Administration to deliver on its Justice40 promise, Congress must ensure that 40 percent of improvements funded by the budget reconciliation bill benefit disadvantaged communities

Joining Attorney General Connors in sending today's letter are the attorneys general of New York, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia.

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

###

For more information, contact:  
Gary H. Yamashiroya  
Special Assistant to the Attorney General  
Department of the Attorney General  
425 Queen Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813