

KAMALA D. HARRIS
U.S. Senator for California



Climate Equity Act

As the United States combats climate change and confronts systemic racism and injustice, we must ensure that frontline communities have a seat at the policymaking table and that nobody gets left behind. Mitigating the worst impacts of the climate crisis and building a clean economy will require policies to reduce emissions and pollution, create good paying jobs, and invest in frontline communities. It will also require policies that tackle the administrative structure of the Executive Branch to more equitably implement climate policy.

We must hold the United States government accountable for ensuring that frontline communities are at the heart of the decision-making process whenever it considers a policy, regulation, or rule with a climate or environmental nexus—which would broadly include policies to address pollution, emissions, transportation, housing, infrastructure, agriculture, resilience, natural disasters, jobs, workforce development, and more.

That is why Senator Kamala D. Harris and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are introducing the Climate Equity Act, which will:

Hold Congress Accountable

- Require relevant legislation receive an equity score that is both quantitative and qualitative to estimate the impact on frontline communities.
- The equity score will be modeled after the economic scores provided by the Congressional Budget Office, will be developed in consultation with experts and leaders from frontline communities, and will be updated periodically with the best available science.

Hold the Executive Branch Accountable

- Require that relevant rules and regulations that have significant impact on frontline communities undergo an additional level of review. This review will aim to mitigate negative impacts, maximize benefits, and bring representatives from frontline communities into the regulatory review process.
- Require relevant federal grant-making and investment programs undergo review to ensure that frontline communities benefit by targeting investments and addressing existing barriers.

Ensure Frontline Communities Lead

- Establish an independent Office of Climate and Environmental Justice Accountability with a Board of Advisors made up of members and allies of frontline communities to represent the views of frontline communities in rulemaking at the beginning of the rulemaking process.
- Establish a new position of Director for Climate and Environmental Justice at all relevant agencies to ensure compliance and coordination.
- Require that representatives of frontline communities are at the table during the drafting and review of relevant rules and regulations, providing insights and comments on how to minimize negative impacts and maximize benefits to frontline communities and ensure those insights and comments are addressed.