

GREEN FOR ALL: MODIFYING THE GREEN NEW DEAL TO PROMOTE
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN THE UNITED STATES

by
Hannah Garber

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Abstract:

As the Earth's climate changes due to human activities, natural and social scientists alike worry for the state of the environment and the potential consequences that environmental degradation have on disadvantaged and marginalized communities. The environmental justice movement emerged from these concerns, and has addressed inequalities at the local level through grassroots and community-based organizations for decades. So far, there has been no lasting traction on environmental justice through legislation at the federal level. As climate concerns become more pressing, disadvantaged and marginalized Americans will face a new set of hardships unless environmental justice is achieved on a large scale in the near future. The Green New Deal proposed by charismatic freshman Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has received a great deal of attention from both advocates and critics. The policy plan has been branded as an overly broad, costly, and ambitious way to tackle environmental and social problems and has generally been considered unviable. Green For All has been developed as a modified version of the Green New Deal proposal, which seeks to promote environmental justice through a transformation of public transit systems, renovation of existing infrastructure, and large-scale federal support of community-based initiatives. Green For All is expected to be significantly cheaper than the Green New Deal and is targeted toward disadvantaged and marginalized Americans. Due to the focused nature of the policy's planned activities and its projected impact on the target population, Green For All is expected to receive support from media, citizens, and members of Congress.

Capstone Advisor: Paul Weinstein

To: Frank Pallone, Jr., Chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce (D-NJ)

From: Hannah Garber

Date: May 7, 2019

Action-Forcing Event:

On February 7, 2019, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey released a 14-page document¹ outlining a progressive plan for a Green New Deal. The plan cites the 2018 National Climate Assessment report's dire evaluation of the condition of our environment and proposes an aggressive response to reverse current conditions and prevent future damage to the planet.

Statement of the Problem:

Recent scientific inquiries have drawn attention to the growing problems of climate change and environmental degradation. In response to these issues, legislators, corporations, and ordinary citizens have taken action to advocate for policies and business practices that serve to combat further destruction of the environment. Although most advocates agree that the planet's condition should be an important concern to all Americans, many have failed to address the fact that members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities experience more of the consequences from unaddressed environmental negatives and fewer benefits from "green" policies which aim to reverse these negatives. This disparity inevitably makes lasting change more difficult to achieve.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report in October 2018, identifying global warming as a major issue for governments to combat in

¹ Recognizing the Duty of the Federal Government to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong., <https://ocasio-cortez.house.gov/> (2019).

the coming years. The panel's report predicts a net change of 1.5°C² in the global temperature between 2030 and 2052 unless measures are taken to reverse this trajectory.³ The report draws on the expertise of climate and policy specialists from around the world, and discusses the predicted implications of such a change in the global climate. In addition to temperature increases and extreme heat, the report predicts that a 1.5°C change in the global temperature will result in increased precipitation in some regions and drought in others.⁴ The report predicts that the impacts of climate change will be most severe for those who are already vulnerable,⁵ establishing a connection between contemporary issues in the realms of social science and natural science.

The 2018 IPCC Special Report draws its assertion regarding the disproportionate impact of global climate change on poor communities or individuals from decades of research on environmental justice. The United States Environmental Protection Agency

² 1.5°C is equivalent to 34.7°F

³ M. Allen, O. P. Dube, W. Solecki, F. Aragón-Durand, W. Cramer, S. Humphreys, M. Kainuma, J. Kala, N. Mahowald, Y. Mulugetta, R. Perez, M. Wairiu, K. Zickfeld, 2018, Framing and Context. In: *Global warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty* [V. Masson-Delmotte, P. Zhai, H. O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J. B. R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M. I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, T. Waterfield (eds.)]. In Press.

⁴ IPCC, 2018: Summary for Policymakers. In: *Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty* [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, H.-O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J.B.R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M.I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, Maycock, M. Tignor, and T. Waterfield (eds.)]. World Meteorological Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, 32 pp.

⁵ Allen, M et al. (2018) Framing and Context. In: *Global warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty* [V. Masson-Delmotte, P. Zhai, H. O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J. B. R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M. I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, T. Waterfield (eds.)]. In Press.

(EPA) defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”⁶ Most environmental justice advocates focus on the distributional disparity between communities based on socioeconomic status and race. Studies have shown that low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately affected by pollution, toxic substances, natural disasters, and other environmental negatives. A 1997 study⁷ found that certain groups experienced significantly higher exposure to air toxics based on socioeconomic status and race. The data revealed that Americans living below the poverty line experienced a 17.8% difference in air toxics exposure than those living above the poverty line. Black Americans and Asian Americans experienced a 65.8% and 36.2% difference in air toxics exposure than White Americans, respectively. Those with less than a high school education experienced a 7.7% difference in air toxics exposure than those with at least a high school diploma.⁸

While numerous studies have attributed the unequal distribution of environmental negatives to both race and socioeconomic status,⁹ a 1987 study conducted by the United

⁶ "Environmental Justice." EPA. April 02, 2019. Accessed April 07, 2019. <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>.

⁷ Brooks, N., Sethi, R., 1997. "The Distribution of Pollution: Community Characteristics and Exposure to Air Toxics."

Environmental Economics and Management. 32, 233–250.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 241;

Percentages were calculated based on Table II: "Mean Exposure for Different Subgroups, 1988-1992"

⁹ Figueroa, Robert M. (2003). "Bivalent Environmental Justice and the Culture of Poverty," *Rutgers University Journal of Law and Urban Policy*, 1(1); United States General Accounting Office (1983). *Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation with Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office; Anderton, D.L. et al. (1994) "Hazardous Waste Facilities: 'Environmental Equity' Issues in Metropolitan Areas." *Evaluation Review*, 18 (2), 123–140; Austin, Regina and Schill, Michael (1991). "Black, Brown, Poor, and Poisoned: Minority Grassroots Environmentalism and the Quest for Eco-Justice," *The Kansas Journal of Law and Public Policy*, 1(1): 69-82.

Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice on environmental justice in U.S. cities showed that race was the most significant determinant of disproportional exposure to environmental negatives. For example, the study found that communities of color were more likely to experience the harmful effects of hazardous waste facilities which have historically been established in areas with a high concentration of minority residents.¹⁰ The Commission's report posits that race is the most important factor contributing to the unequal distribution of hazardous waste facilities, finding Black and Hispanic communities to be the most severely affected, with 60%¹¹ of individuals in these subgroups living in disproportionately close proximity to a hazardous waste facility. The disparity in exposure to pollutants, toxic substances, and other environmental negatives is exacerbated by unequal access to adequate health care experienced by the same communities or subgroups.¹² Furthermore, minority and low-income communities are also disproportionately excluded by the laws set in place to reduce environmental negatives. A 1992 investigation by Marianne Lavelle and Marcia Coyle¹³ found that the enforcement of environmental policies is more than five hundred percent higher in communities with a white majority, amplifying the distributional injustices that disadvantaged and marginalized subgroups already face.

¹⁰ United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice (1987). *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States: A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites*. New York: United Church of Christ.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. xiv;

Figure calculated based on analysis of results, which state that "[three] out of every five Black and Hispanic Americans lived in communities with uncontrolled toxic waste sites."

¹² Ramírez de Arellano, Annette B. and Sidney M. Wolfe (2007). "Unsettling Scores: A Ranking of State Medicaid Programs," *Public Citizen Health Research Group*. Washington, DC: Public Citizen Press; this study finds that Medicaid availability and quality of care are higher in states with higher median incomes.

¹³ Lavelle, Marianne and Coyle, Marcia (1992). "Unequal Protection: The Racial Divide in Environmental Law," *The National Law Journal*, 15(3): S2.

Finally, in addition to the distributional inequality, there is a gap in opportunity for participation in environmental matters. Numerous studies find that minority or low-income communities not only experience higher exposure to environmental negatives but also participate less frequently in collective action, have lower levels of voter turnout, and find less opportunity to influence environmental policy. Eileen Gauna highlights the need to recognize the experience and knowledge of “misfits,”¹⁴ or those who might typically be ignored in social and environmental movements. She refers to the informal knowledge inherent to many disadvantaged communities, and emphasizes the need for activists and policymakers to consider these ideas when determining policies and activities that will affect these disadvantaged and marginalized subgroups. Greg Hampton agrees that certain, more privileged communities are offered more opportunities to participate in decision-making.¹⁵ However, the recognition that some subgroups are underrepresented in discussions about environmental policy is not sufficient to achieve true environmental justice, which requires that all individuals and subgroups have equal access to decision-making. Inspired by some of these studies, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed The Model Plan for Public Participation¹⁶ to encourage equal access to community-based initiatives and the policy-making process. Still, public engagement, as measured by voter turnout, tends to be low among racial and ethnic minorities, those with lower levels of education, and low-income individuals.¹⁷

¹⁴ Gauna, Eileen (1998). “The Environmental Justice Misfit: Public Participation and the Paradigm Paradox,” *The Stanford University Law Journal*. 17:3-72.

¹⁵ Hampton, Greg (1999). “Environmental Equity and Public Participation,” *Policy Sciences*, 32(2) 163-174.

¹⁶ United States Environmental Protection Agency (2000). *The Model Plan for Public Participation*, Washington, DC: EPA Office of Environmental Justice. EPA-300-K-00-001.

¹⁷ Pew Research Center, “The Party of Nonvoters: Younger, More Racially Diverse, More Financially Strapped,” Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. October 31, 2014. Accessed February 8, 2019. <http://www.people-press.org/2014/10/31/the-party-of-nonvoters-2/>;

Based on the extant research presented above, this memo seeks to solve the problem of environmental injustice by targeting environmental policies to groups that have been historically underserved. These groups include racial, ethnic, religious, socio-economic, and other disadvantaged minority groups within the United States, and will be referred to throughout this paper as “disadvantaged and marginalized” communities. Environmental justice will be defined in this document as: equal protection from environmental negatives, equal access to environmental benefits, and equal opportunity for participation in environmental stewardship and decision-making.

History & Background

In 2016 the city of Flint, Michigan made national headlines when it was revealed that the water supply had been contaminated during an effort to save money. When residents discovered that their drinking water had been poisoned, officials were confronted with a public outcry against the relaxed manner in which the case appeared to be handled.¹⁸ Nearly two years after the city began to draw its water supply from the

the use of voter turnout as a measure of public participation in an environmental justice framework is introduced by J.K Boyce et al (Boyce, James K., Andrew R. Klemmer, Paul H. Templet, and Cleve E. Willis. "Power Distribution, the Environment, and Public Health: A State-level Analysis." *Ecological Economics* 29 (1999): 127-40) as a means of identifying unequal power dynamics. Boyce et al. assert that in communities with low levels of environmental justice, community participation is low as evident in low levels of voter turnout.

¹⁸ Davis, Matthew M., Chris Kolb, Lawrence Reynolds, Eric Rothstein, and Ken Sikkema. *Final Report*. Flint Water Advisory Task Force. March 21, 2016. Accessed March 1, 2019, pp. 16-21. https://www.michigan.gov/documents/snyder/FWATF_FINAL_REPORT_21March2016_517805_7.pdf; The Flint Water Advisory Taskforce’s report includes a timeline of events that led to the crisis. This timeline indicates that water quality concerns were raised as early as August 2014. Despite near-constant complaints throughout the time period following the switch from Detroit Water to the Flint River, officials ignored early warning signs, referencing the enormous cost of switching the water source back to Detroit Water. Officials went so far as to declare that the crisis had ended in May 2015, despite incoming reports from scientists and citizens claiming that the water was still contaminated with unacceptably high lead levels. Near the end of 2015, the city switched its water supply back from the Flint River, but this did not put an immediate end to the problem. In January 2016, the Mayor of Flint declared a state of emergency on behalf of the residents who were still experiencing the aftermath of the crisis (“Flint Water

Flint River, the Flint Water Advisory Taskforce's investigation¹⁹ implicated officials at every level, drawing attention to the longevity of the crisis and the lack of action on the part of managers and lawmakers. The crisis was particularly detrimental to the city due to its demographic makeup. The population of Flint is predominantly made up of racial minorities and other disadvantaged subgroups, with more than fifty percent of residents being Black and over 40% of residents living under the poverty line²⁰. After considering these factors and the length of time that lapsed before the issue was fully addressed, the Flint Water Advisory Taskforce declared this "a clear case of environmental injustice."²¹

Flint officials' slow response to the crisis may have partially stemmed from the relative novelty of modern environmental policy. The 1960s saw the introduction of legislation which addressed the correlation between air quality and health through the passage of the Clean Air Act. The 1970s introduced a major shift toward environmentalism with the passage of the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Toxic Substances Control Act, and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The movement was short-lived, however, and struggled to find a consistent foothold that would allow it to withstand administration changes.²² During each of the Reagan, Bush I, and Bush II administrations, environmental policy was either placed on the backburner or rolled back altogether. George W. Bush received a great deal

Crisis/Recovery Efforts." City of Flint. 2016. Accessed March 1, 2019. <https://www.cityofflint.com/state-of-emergency/>).

¹⁹ Davis, Matthew M., Chris Kolb, Lawrence Reynolds, Eric Rothstein, and Ken Sikkema. *Final Report*.

²⁰ "U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Flint City, Michigan." Census Bureau QuickFacts. Accessed March 1, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/flintcitymichigan/PST045217>.

²¹ Davis, Matthew M., Chris Kolb, Lawrence Reynolds, Eric Rothstein, and Ken Sikkema. *Final Report*, p. 9

²² Kraft, Michael E. *Environmental Policy and Politics*. 4th ed. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2007.

of criticism for reversing much of the progress made during the Clinton years due to his family's connections to the global oil industry.²³

By the time the Clintons moved into the White House, environmental initiatives enacted during the previous decades had undergone multiple reiterations and modifications and had been inconsistently enforced. The 1990s were characterized by a growing global emphasis on environmental issues, especially when viewed through a social-justice framework. In 1992, the United States participated in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), marking the beginning of a “progressive international ecology movement that combines...social-economic and ecological justice.”²⁴ Shortly after convening with other developed and developing countries to discuss global and regional environmental priorities, the U.S. modified the Clean Air Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The UNCED conference provided fuel for the efforts of activists, sparking a new movement toward environmental justice initiatives in the U.S. in the 1990s. Whereas environmental justice had been historically left to be addressed through grassroots initiatives, the new decade saw the passage of President Clinton's Executive Order 12898 which placed environmental justice at the top of all federal agencies' agendas.²⁵ Due to the President's prioritization of environmental justice, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established an Office of Environmental Justice in 1992 to “address the disproportionately adverse human health and environmental impacts in overburdened

²³ Kraft, *Environmental Policy and Politics*, pp. 106-107.

²⁴ Faber, Daniel, and James O'Connor. "Capitalism and the Crisis of Environmentalism." In *Toxic Struggles: The Theory and Practice of Environmental Justice*, edited by Richard Hofrichter, 12-24. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2002; p. 22

²⁵ Kraft, *Environmental Policy and Politics*, p. 223

communities by integrating environmental justice considerations throughout the Agency.”²⁶ Despite its expected impact on the EPA-managed Superfund²⁷ program, Executive Order 12898’s success in promoting environmental justice is questionable. Superfund was designed to provide resources for the cleanup of hazardous waste sites, while holding site owners responsible for the cleanup operations, whenever possible.²⁸ However, an analysis of the impact of Executive Order 12898 on the Superfund Program found that the program has not promoted environmental justice to the fullest extent possible. The 2007 study²⁹ revealed that hazardous facilities in communities with high minority and low-income populations were less likely to be placed on the priority list for cleanup operations and less likely to be prioritized over other listed sites even if the sites posed a higher risk to human and environmental health. Despite the program’s success in cleaning up more than 1,500 hazardous waste sites,³⁰ the study posits that communities with higher political bargaining power were more likely to have their hazardous waste sites addressed than those with little political bargaining power.³¹ This study demonstrates how disadvantaged and marginalized communities are disproportionately

²⁶ Office of Environmental Justice. *Tools and Products for Environmental Justice Action*. PDF. United States Environmental Protection Agency, September 2017.

²⁷ "Superfund: CERCLA Overview." EPA. June 04, 2018. Accessed March 9, 2019.

<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-cercla-overview>;

in 1980 Congress enacted the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), which is colloquially referred to as Superfund. Superfund provides resources for the EPA to respond to environmental and public health hazards. Sites which are deemed to be hazardous are placed on the National Priorities List and are to be addressed according to urgency, with human health as the highest priority.

²⁸ "What Is Superfund?" EPA. November 30, 2018. Accessed March 9, 2019.

<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/what-superfund>.

²⁹ O’Neil, Sandra George (2007). “Evaluating the Impact of Executive Order 12898.” *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 115(7): 1087-1093.

³⁰ "Superfund Remedial Annual Accomplishments." EPA. March 04, 2019. Accessed March 9, 2019.

<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-remedial-annual-accomplishments>;

this number is current as of the end of FY2018.

³¹ O’Neil, Sandra George (2007). “Evaluating the Impact of Executive Order 12898.” *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 115(7): 1087-1093, p. 1090.

harmed by environmental negatives, experience fewer benefits from environmental policies, and have fewer opportunities to participate in environmental stewardship and decision-making.

Overall, the efforts of Congress, the EPA, and President Clinton accomplished relatively little for communities suffering from environmental injustice. This was partially due to the lack of authority or policy-making capacity that many of the entities which promoted environmental justice faced. Because of the absence of significant change, especially for marginalized communities, many have criticized the perceived “inauthenticity”³² of the environmental justice initiatives that originated in the executive branch. John O’Connor (2002) asserts that, since the citizens who would be most-affected by such decisions had no say in the regulatory process, attempts at promoting environmental justice and “green” policies in general have done little more than concentrate environmental negatives in low-income and minority-dominant locations.³³

The environmental justice movement emerged alongside the broader environmental movement in the 1970s. As demonstrated above, environmental justice was not successfully addressed by the federal government, prompting activists to take a stand to protect the disadvantaged and marginalized communities which would suffer the most from lax or unequal implementation of new environmental policies. Most of the environmental justice successes from this time period were achieved through grassroots efforts led by members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities. Leadership and

³² Schlosberg, David. *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

³³ O’Connor, John. “The Promise of Environmental Democracy.” In *Toxic Struggles: The Theory and Practice of Environmental Justice*, edited by Richard Hofrichter, 47-57. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2002; pp. 50-52

engagement from within the at-risk communities is believed to be the key to achieving lasting change,³⁴ emphasizing the importance of the third prong of the definition of environmental justice: equal opportunity to participate in environmental stewardship and decision-making.

For this reason, people of color have led some of the most impactful grassroots campaigns for environmental justice. One of the first instances of a community of color fighting for environmental justice occurred in the early 1980s, when a minority-dominated, low-income town in North Carolina became the dump-site for a dangerous amount of hazardous waste, which would have significant impacts on the health and wellbeing of those living nearby. The Warren County protests gained national attention, and many citizens were arrested for occupying the site to prevent work from being done.³⁵ While activists were unable to put an end to this project altogether,³⁶ they did succeed in shifting the narrative and drawing attention to the injustices that communities of color face, ultimately kicking off the modern environmental justice movement. The

³⁴ Moore, Richard & Lewis Head. "Acknowledging the Past, Confronting the Present: Environmental Justice in the 1990s." In *Toxic Struggles: The Theory and Practice of Environmental Justice*, edited by Richard Hofrichter, 118-127. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2002; p. 125.

³⁵ Schlosberg, D, *Defining Environmental Justice*, p. 47; Ferris, Deeohn, and David Hahn-Baker. "Environmentalists and Environmental Justice Policy." In *Environmental Justice: Issues, Policies, and Solutions*, edited by Bunyan Bryant, 66-75. Washington, DC: Island Press, 1995, p. 68; Lee, Charles.

"Beyond Toxic Wastes and Race." In *Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots*, edited by Robert D. Bullard, 41-52. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1993; Taylor, Dorceta E.

"Environmentalism and the Politics of Inclusion." In *Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots*, edited by Robert D. Bullard, 53-61. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1993.

³⁶ "ROADSIDE PCB SPILL Site Profile." EPA. October 20, 2017. Accessed March 9, 2019.

<https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.cleanup&id=0403068>; the protests were in response to the concentration of hazardous waste collected from a 243-mile stretch of land in a landfill constructed in a small town in Warren County, with a predominantly minority and low-income population. The EPA considers this operation to be a success, as the hazardous soil from an illegal disposal operation was concentrated into one location. The site was delisted from the Superfund National Priority List in 1986 despite the fact that 40,000 cubic yards of hazardous soil still existed at the landfill.

Warren County incident spurred a series of similar events across the country, as more and more vulnerable communities demanded to be included in the discussion about environmental issues, especially ones that would predominantly affect them.

The movement served as a direct backlash against the unequal enforcement of environmental policies that was prevalent in the 1970s. Activists began to recognize that the existing legislation would not be sufficient to address environmental concerns universally, with low-income and minority communities bearing most of the consequences. Despite the rise of environmental justice activism in the 1980s, the problem of ineffective legislation was exacerbated during the Reagan era, when much of the responsibility for interpreting and enforcing environmental regulations was delegated to the states.³⁷ Therefore, the Warren County protests marked a clear divergence in power; policymakers held the authority to enact new regulations but environmental justice advocates had the power to enact tangible change in their local communities. The resulting movement would lead to many victories through similar acts of protest and civil disobedience and would keep environmental justice issues on the agenda well into the 1990s. For example, the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit was held in 1991; the conference successfully concluded with a series of seventeen principles of environmental justice³⁸ and engaged an underrepresented population in the discussion on environmental policy. The principles established at the

³⁷ Lee, Charles. "Beyond Toxic Wastes and Race." In *Confronting Environmental Racism*, edited by Robert D. Bullard, pp. 46-47

³⁸ "Principles of Environmental Justice." *Environmental Justice / Environmental Racism*. April 6, 1996. Accessed March 9, 2019. <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>.

summit demonstrate the intersectional nature³⁹ of the environmental justice movement, providing a clear link between social justice and environmental sustainability.

In recent years, environmental justice activism and research has waned slightly, although it will likely become prominent again as discussions around environmental policy and climate change begin to resurface. Much of the recent literature tends to separate the topics of environmental sustainability and social justice, or else place environmental justice as a small subsection within either topic. However, as globalization continues, it will become increasingly more imperative that environmental justice issues are addressed – this time, on a global scale. As awareness spreads to developing countries, changes will have to be made to include these countries in any plan for achieving environmental sustainability and social justice. For example, in 1988 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) condemned developed countries who dumped hazardous waste in African countries and declared this practice illegal.⁴⁰ As the developing world becomes more engaged and aware of environmental issues, developed countries must ensure that all international regulations are enforced equitably. Globalization and urbanization will bring another set of problems related to the environment, and on a much larger scale. Nations should be cognizant of not only the human, economic, and political losses associated with war, but also the devastation of the environment and natural resources during armed conflict.⁴¹ Overall, there has been some

³⁹ David Schlosberg (2007) refers to the environmental justice movement as a synthesis of various other movements, including: civil rights, occupational safety and health, and social justice, among others (Schlosberg, D., *Defining Environmental Justice*, p. 48.

⁴⁰ Alston, Dana and Nicole Brown. "Global Threats to People of Color." In *Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots*, edited by Robert D. Bullard, 179-194. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1993, p. 185.

⁴¹ Alston and Brown refer to this environmentally devastating effect of war as "ecocide." Alston and Brown, "Global Threats," ." In *Confronting Environmental Racism*, edited by Robert D. Bullard, p. 180

progress toward a rebirth of the environmental justice movement. For instance, in 1992, the U.S. joined other developed nations in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was later expanded via the Kyoto Protocol and, most recently, the Doha Amendment,⁴² committing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a set target date.

The most recent policy proposal related to environmental justice is the outline of the Green New Deal⁴³ released by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey in February 2019. The plan references a variety of issues including climate change, wages, job creation, sustainability, infrastructure, and justice and equity, among others. The proposed Green New Deal features at least fifteen separate ideas, drawing inspiration from the broad and overall successful New Deal initiatives spearheaded by Franklin Delano Roosevelt after the Great Depression. Environmental justice is referenced indirectly in the proposal, but equal protection from environmental negatives, equal access to environmental benefits, and equal opportunity for participation are common themes throughout.

The Green New Deal has been received with criticism, as it is expected to be expensive and require an overhaul of a number of existing systems. The proposal lists five primary goals: (1) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100%; (2) to create jobs with livable wages so that all Americans can experience “prosperity and economic security;”⁴⁴(3) to create sustainable, modern infrastructure; (4) to ensure that all Americans are afforded access to environmental benefits; and (5) to prioritize justice for

⁴² "The Doha Amendment." UNFCCC. Accessed March 16, 2019. <https://unfccc.int/process/the-kyoto-protocol/the-doha-amendment>.

⁴³ Recognizing the Duty to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5

“frontline and vulnerable communities”⁴⁵ which include “indigenous peoples, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth.”⁴⁶ While the phrase “environmental justice” is not mentioned explicitly in the plan, the proposed actions are expected to result in improved conditions for all Americans and the environment. An more detailed analysis of Ocasio-Cortez and Markey’s Green New Deal proposal is included later in this memo.

Key Actors:

Key actors include those with a vested interest in finding a solution to social and economic injustices, those who are concerned about the state of the environment, and those who have explicitly stated environmental justice as a priority. Left-wing policy-makers, activists and nonprofit organizations, and members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities will be interested in a solution of existing social and economic issues. Environmentalists, scientists, and left-wing politicians will be interested in tackling climate change and other environmental issues which have gone unaddressed. These supporters can be expected to have a vested interest in the subject of environmental justice, as they will find that environmental sustainability and social justice are inseparable.⁴⁷

While environmental justice has relinquished its spot on the top of the national priorities list as of late, some policymakers and activists still consider this topic to be

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 6,

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 5-6

⁴⁷ Hutson, Malo André. *The Urban Struggle for Economic, Environmental and Social Justice Deepening Their Roots*. London: Routledge, 2016.

important. Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) and Rep. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL) introduced a resolution⁴⁸ to tackle environmental justice in 2017, which was not passed. Members of Congress who have been vocal about supporting the Green New Deal include Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), Deb Haaland (D-NM), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), Ilhan Omar (D-MN), Antonio Delgado (D-NY), John Lewis (D-GA), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), José Serrano (D-NY), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), and Joe Neguse (D-CO). These are policymakers who might become supporters of the following proposal, or may remain staunch supporters of existing ideas such as Ocasio-Cortez and Markey's proposal.

Grassroots organizations which advocate for environmental justice will likely support any policy proposal which will award federal funds to focus on local environmental justice initiatives. These organizations often target members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities, and rely heavily on grants to fund their projects and activities. Government agencies including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and others will be impacted by any new policies that are passed by Congress and may play an active role in implementing these policies. The EPA has already been vocal about environmental justice, awarding small grants to community-based organizations which seek to promote environmental justice at the local level on an annual basis since 1994.⁴⁹ Left-wing politicians and voters will likely be interested in

⁴⁸ Environmental Justice Act of 2017, H.R. Res. 270, 115 Cong., <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/270> (2017).

⁴⁹ "Environmental Justice Small Grants Program." EPA. January 31, 2019. Accessed April 21, 2019. <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-small-grants-program>.

exploring the issue of environmental justice further, as Progressive Democrats have shown some support for Ocasio-Cortez and Markey's 2019 Green New Deal proposal.

Most Republicans can be expected to object to the notion that the topic of environmental justice merits scrutiny, especially since it has already been addressed in the past. Misinformation and "victim blaming"⁵⁰ have occurred often enough that many believe that disadvantaged communities have requested to have toxic waste facilities and other environmental hazards placed nearby their homes in order to boost the local economy.⁵¹ Other critics of federal initiatives to promote environmental justice might be found in the heads of large manufacturing or oil corporations, which will likely oppose any additional scrutiny or regulation of their business practices in the name of environmental preservation. These large corporations can be expected to fight the implementation of any new environmental policies that cause inefficiencies in production and therefore reduce profit. Corporations may exercise leverage on policymakers by threatening to take operations overseas or rescind promised campaign contributions.

Policy Proposal

The proposed policy is a modification of the Green New Deal proposal offered by Rep. Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Markey. The original Green New Deal is broad and encompasses a variety of policy areas, removing some of the focus from environmental justice. The modified proposal will be presented as the "Green For All" plan, which focuses many of the Green New Deal's ideas to primarily benefit those who have been historically underserved.

⁵⁰ Bullard, Robert D. "Conclusion: Environmentalism with Justice." In *Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots*, edited by Robert D. Bullard, 195-206. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1993, pp. 200-201

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201

The Green New Deal explicitly states five goals⁵² for the program: (1) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100%; (2) to create jobs with livable wages so that all Americans can experience “prosperity and economic security;”⁵³(3) to create sustainable, modern infrastructure; (4) to ensure access to environmental benefits for all Americans; and (5) to prioritize justice for “frontline and vulnerable communities”⁵⁴ which include “indigenous peoples, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth.”⁵⁵

The Green For All plan will pursue the following, modified goals: (1) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles by 10%, especially in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized communities; (2) to provide well-paying employment to members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Green For All sponsored projects; (3) to update existing infrastructure and buildings in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans; (4) to ensure that members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities are afforded equal access to environmental benefits such as clean air and water; and (5) to prioritize environmental justice for members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities by remedying existing injustices and introducing protections against further injustices.

⁵² Recognizing the Duty to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong., pp. 5-6; the proposal clearly states five main goals for the resolution.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 5

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 6;

the Green For All proposal will refer to these communities as “disadvantaged and marginalized communities.”

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 5-6

Ocasio-Cortez and Markey name a number of ways in which the Green New Deal will address sustainability. The proposal calls for a full transition to renewable energy; construction of an energy-efficient power grid; renovation of “all existing buildings...and building new buildings to achieve maximal energy efficiency, water efficiency, safety, affordability, comfort, and durability...;”⁵⁶ replacement of all existing transportation with zero-emission vehicles, environmentally friendly public transportation options, and high-speed rail; improvement of the environment’s overall state through “preservation and afforestation;”⁵⁷ reduction of greenhouse gas emissions caused by unsustainable agricultural practices; and protection of lands historically owned by native peoples. The Green For All plan will address sustainability by transitioning to renewable energy sources in all sponsored projects, renovating buildings and infrastructure and installing environmentally-friendly public transportation options in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized populations.

The Green New Deal plans to tackle economic inequality primarily by focusing on the needs of American workers. The plan calls for guaranteed jobs with livable wages, adequate leave provisions, and other benefits; stronger labor laws; introduction of “public ownership”⁵⁸ of public entities; accessibility to higher education for all, especially those who are members of “frontline and vulnerable communities;”⁵⁹ renewed appeal and strength of labor unions; trade deals which are based on their positive impacts on labor and the environment; and universal access to quality health care, housing, a social safety

⁵⁶ Ibid., p, 7

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 9

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 10-11

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 6

net, and “clean water, clean air, healthy and affordable food, and nature”⁶⁰ for all Americans. The Green For All plan will utilize local workers for each sponsored project, and will ensure that all workers are provided with a livable wage and benefits. Green For All expects that associated projects will result in the creation of at least five-million job-years. This figure is estimated using the formula provided by the Obama administration to explain the predicted impacts of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) on job creation. The formula estimates that approximately \$92,000 in federal spending creates one job-year. The Green For All proposal predicts a \$500 billion budget which, when used in the given formula, predicts that Green For All could potentially create more than five-million jobs for Americans.⁶¹

Like the Green New Deal, the Green For All plan expects the projects named above to occur simultaneously and immediately. Green For All initiatives are expected to make significant headway within ten years. Success will be measured based on the extent to which the programs are implemented within the ten-year implementation period.

Policy Implementation Tool

Many of the plans laid out in Ocasio-Cortez’ Green New Deal proposal simply call for funding. Although the proposal does not specify the exact funding structure, it is likely that most funds would be given to private organizations rather than awarded to the states as grants. If enacted, the Green New Deal would pursue financial commitments⁶²

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 14

⁶¹ Executive Office of the President. "Estimates of Job Creation from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009." The White House: President Barack Obama. May 2009. Accessed April 21, 2019. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/cea/Estimate-of-Job-Creation>.

⁶²Recognizing the Duty to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong.; these commitments can be found throughout the resolution, and have been summarized for clarity in this section.

in support of community-based initiatives, infrastructure and building upgrades, energy-efficient power sources and renewable energy options, sustainable agriculture, clean and energy-efficient transportation, “low tech solutions that increase soil carbon storage, such as land preservation and afforestation,”⁶³ preservation of “threatened, endangered, and fragile ecosystems through locally appropriate and science-based projects that enhance biodiversity and support climate resiliency,”⁶⁴ and elimination of hazardous waste sites (which are frequently located in low-income neighborhoods) in order to stimulate economic development in these locations.

Green For All will similarly provide funding to a number of entities including community-based organizations, private contractors, and government agencies in order to implement projects throughout the country which enhance Green For All goals. Funding will be awarded to organizations and firms which employ local workers and provide all employees with a livable wage and benefits. Strict audits will be imposed on awardees, at random, throughout the 10-year implementation period and the duration of any projects that remain in effect thereafter to ensure that they are compliant with Green For All standards. Funding will be awarded as contracts for specific projects that are to be defined by the implementing agency. The Department of Transportation (DOT) will receive additional discretionary funding, beginning in FY2021, to award to contractors for the replacement of existing public transportation in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans. Replacements will be required to fit Green For All standards, which include: zero greenhouse gas emissions from new vehicles,

⁶³ Ibid. p. 9

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 9

affordability, accessibility to all members of the community, and subjection to regular audits conducted on a randomized basis to ensure compliance. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will receive additional discretionary funding, beginning in FY2021, to award to contractors for the renovation and replacement of existing buildings located in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans. Renovated or newly constructed buildings will be required to fit Green For All standards, which include: safety, affordability, sustainability, energy and water-efficiency, and subjection to regular audits conducted on a randomized basis to ensure compliance. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will receive additional discretionary funding, beginning in FY2021, to award to community-based organizations for projects designed to enhance safety, quality, and beauty in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans. Projects will focus on cleaning up existing environmental hazards, building community resiliency in natural disasters, and increasing access to nature for members of these historically underserved communities.

Green For All intends to improve the lives of disadvantaged and marginalized populations, and places the bulk of responsibility for implementation on industry giants, manufacturers, and other commercial entities which are believed to play a major role in the degradation of the environment through pollution and unsustainable practices. Funding will be presented to these responsible parties as a “carrot,” intended to incentivize corporations to eliminate these environmentally irresponsible practices and align themselves with Green For All’s goal of bringing environmental justice to disadvantaged and marginalized populations. The proposal operates on the assumption

that the availability of major federal contracts will convince industry leaders to facilitate a major shift toward these goals in a relatively short period of time.

Green For All's financial incentive for commercial entities through the creation of federal contracts is loosely modeled after the Green New Deal proposal. However, with a more focused goal of creating change in disadvantaged and marginalized communities, Green For All will specifically fund projects in areas with significant minority and low-income populations. The hope is that the private sector will view these projects as an opportunity to continue the process of change in other communities which are not sponsored by Green For All, creating a larger movement with an alliance consisting of public, private, and not-for-profit organizations. While Green For All is targeted in a way such that the private sector will bear much of the responsibility for implementing the proposed changes, the proposal's intended outcomes are targeted toward members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities. While the long-term goal of Green For All is to facilitate lasting change for all Americans, it is understood that the needs of communities which are historically underserved must be addressed before equality can even be considered attainable.

Green for All's model deviates most decidedly from existing proposals on the issue of cost. The Green New Deal proposal does not lay out an estimated budget at all. However, experts have attempted to calculate rough estimates of the costs of each proposed project. Forbes contributor Milton Ezrati compiled estimates for some of the proposed items from various sources, ultimately predicting that it would cost the United States approximately \$2.5 trillion per year for just under half of the proposed projects to

be completed.⁶⁵ Therefore, it can be inferred that it will cost at least \$5 trillion per year for the successful implementation of the 10-year mobilization plan.

Green For All is a much more affordable policy plan, due to its focus on promoting environmental justice for just one portion of the population. To allow for additional discretionary funding to be allotted to USDOT, HUD, and EPA, the FY2021 budget will need to be increased by at least \$500 billion. This would allow for USDOT to receive \$245 billion more, HUD to receive \$250 billion more and EPA to receive \$5 billion more in discretionary funding, to be awarded to grantees and contractors for the implementation of Green For All initiatives. With this budget, it is expected that at least 150 major public transit projects, 5000 individual building renovation projects, and 10,000 community-based initiatives can be undertaken. If FY2021 projects are deemed successful, the budget in subsequent years may be altered as necessary to allow for more projects to be completed.

Policy Authorization Tool

Similarly to the Green New Deal, Green For All is a policy plan, which will be proposed as a House Resolution. In order to pass into law, the proposal will undergo committee deliberations. Once approved by the designated committee, the resolution will be sent to the House floor for voting. A simple majority is required for the resolution to be passed onto the Senate. In the Senate, the same process occurs: committee deliberations, voting, and passage by a simple majority. If the House and Senate pass different versions of the resolution, deliberations must be held once more until one

⁶⁵ Ezrati, Milton. "The Green New Deal And The Cost Of Virtue." Forbes. February 20, 2019. Accessed March 10, 2019. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/miltonezrati/2019/02/19/the-green-new-deal-and-the-cost-of-virtue/#10d6340d3dec>

version is agreed upon. The final result must be signed or vetoed by the President of the United States within ten days. If the resolution is signed by the President, it becomes law. If it is vetoed, it returns to both chambers of Congress and requires two-thirds approval from both chambers in order to bypass the veto.⁶⁶

Policy Analysis

The Green New Deal is in its earliest stages but is expected to face a number of obstacles which will ultimately prevent it from becoming law in the near future. For instance, the Green New Deal is too broad and too expensive to be feasible. The fourteen-point plan is expected to cost at least \$5 trillion per year and covers topics ranging from sustainability and pollution to jobs and higher education, resulting in an overall lack of focus. The Green For All proposal seeks to bypass these obstacles by presenting a more feasible and affordable option that will be more likely to promote environmental justice for disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

The Green New Deal provides a starting point for Green For All to improve upon. The former proposal's preamble makes the rationale for implementing a large-scale environmental justice initiative abundantly clear and provides a guide for Green For All's goals and implementation. The first section of the Green New Deal's preamble cites the IPCC's 2018 report on climate change⁶⁷ and applies its findings to predict the potential outcomes faced by the United States if change is not made. These projected outcomes

⁶⁶ US Constitution, Article I, Sec. 7. Accessed <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript>.

⁶⁷ Allen, M et al. (2018) Framing and Context. In: *Global warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty* [V. Masson-Delmotte, P. Zhai, H. O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J. B. R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M. I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, T. Waterfield (eds.)]. In Press.

include health-related consequences, damage to natural resources, and economic losses.⁶⁸ The Green New Deal expects the United States to bear responsibility “for a disproportionate amount of greenhouse gas emissions”⁶⁹ and declares that the U.S. must leverage its technological advancement to become a global leader in “reducing emissions through economic transformation.”⁷⁰ This statement is left decidedly underdeveloped throughout the rest of the proposal, making it unclear to the reader what actions the policy will implement, whether the goal for this transformation is primarily economic or environmental in nature, and leaving the logical connection between two variables unaddressed. Green For All is explicitly intended as a domestic policy initiative, with the understanding that environmental improvements in the United States can have global implications.

The preamble to the Green New Deal proposal states that “the United States is currently experiencing several related crises”⁷¹ such as declining life expectancy, inaccessibility of basic human needs, economic hardship for working class Americans, and income inequality.⁷² Although it is implied, this statement fails to address explicitly how these challenges are related to environmental issues, a trend that continues throughout the remainder of the proposal. Green For All is clear about the inextricable connection between environmental negatives and reduced quality of life for members of disadvantaged and marginalized populations. For this reason, Green For All is targeted specifically toward improving environmental conditions in and around these communities

⁶⁸ Recognizing the Duty to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong., pp. 1-2

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 3

first, with the hope that this initiative will spark a similar movement in other communities which are already empowered to prioritize environmental sustainability for themselves.

The Green New Deal's preamble concludes a statement of its intention to draw inspiration from the original New Deal. The Green New Deal would differ from its predecessor in its emphasis on environmental protection and economic justice for the disadvantaged. However, the preamble concludes by stating that the Green New Deal is “a historic opportunity— (1) to create millions of good, high-wage jobs in the United States; (2) to provide unprecedented levels of prosperity and economic security for all people of the United States; and (3) to counteract systemic injustices...”⁷³ These stated opportunities, along with other ideas which are scattered throughout the Green New Deal proposal, are presented in a way that makes it unclear what the true focus of the proposal would be, especially considering that the proposal explicitly names five goals which do not encompass some of these supplemental ideas. Conversely, Green For All does not envision that a complete overhaul of existing practices is necessary at this time, nor does it assume such a drastic change could be feasible in a short period of time. Green For All seeks to provide a tangible starting point toward a more sweeping, future transformation by first promoting environmental justice for the communities which currently face the most injustice. While Green For All is not intended to be a final fix for all environmental and social problems we currently face, the policy will remedy those issues which are deemed the most urgent: ensuring that disadvantaged and marginalized populations have equal protection from environmental negatives, equal access to environmental positives, and equal opportunity to participate in environmental stewardship and decision-making.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 4

Although the Green New Deal proposal is riddled with sub-goals and tangents, the document does explicitly state the following five goals⁷⁴: (1) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100%; (2) to create jobs with livable wages so that all Americans can experience “prosperity and economic security;”⁷⁵(3) to create sustainable, modern infrastructure; (4) to ensure equal access to environmental positives; and (5) to prioritize justice for “frontline and vulnerable communities.”⁷⁶ While these aspirations are explicitly labeled as the Green New Deal’s goals, they do not provide much clarity for the policy’s proposed implementation, expected outcomes, or main purpose. Considering the tangential nature of the rest of the proposal, these stated goals do not clarify the main purpose of the proposed policy, provide clues on what types of actions will be undertaken if the policy is enacted, or tie together the numerous disparate sub-goals that are scattered throughout the proposal.

Green For All’s goals are simple: (1) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles by 10%, especially in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized communities; (2) to provide well-paying employment to members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Green For All sponsored projects; (3) to update existing infrastructure and buildings in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans; (4) to ensure that members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities are afforded equal access to environmental benefits such as clean air and water; and (5) to prioritize environmental justice for members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities by remedying existing injustices and

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 5

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 6,

introducing protections against further injustices. These goals directly inform Green For All's implementation, ensure that the target population is clearly stated, and support the overarching goal of promoting environmental justice for disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

As mentioned previously, the Green New Deal proposal does not provide any guidelines for budgeting, which has led to wild speculation about the potential economic impacts of such a sweeping plan. There is no explicit mention of funding for actions that will result in the goals laid out in the proposal, nor is there mention of how much the proposal in its entirety will cost. For a resolution with such a specific due-date (ten years from the present), a price tag would be valuable for lawmakers to objectively determine the feasibility of the policy in action. Experts have compiled estimates from various sectors to showcase just how expensive the Green New Deal is anticipated to be. Based on these estimates, the Green New Deal is expected to cost at least \$5 trillion per year for the next ten years. This number would more than double federal spending, which is especially alarming as the nearly \$5 trillion that the federal government expects to expend in FY2020⁷⁷ has already experienced a great deal of criticism. It is unclear from the proposal which agencies would be expected to cover the costs for the policy's activities; however, cursory cost estimates show that the Green New Deal would not be able to take effect under the current budget.

⁷⁷ U.S. Government Publishing Office. *Fiscal Year 2020 Budget of the United States: A Budget for a Better America*. By Donald J. Trump. Accessed March 16, 2019. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2020-BUD/pdf/BUDGET-2020-BUD.pdf>.

For example, Milton Ezrati's analysis finds that a full conversion to clean energy would cost approximately \$200 billion per year,⁷⁸ which is \$168.3 billion more than the Department of Energy would receive under the 2020 budget plan.⁷⁹ If Ocasio-Cortez and Markey planned on having the Department of Energy promote this conversion through grants (as the proposal's use of the term 'investment'⁸⁰ seems to imply), the existing budget would certainly not allow for such a massive campaign. Similarly, Ezrati's analysis estimates that the Green New Deal's plan to address greenhouse gas emissions would cost at least \$110 billion per year.⁸¹ The proposal names two main ways in which greenhouse gases will be addressed: replacing existing vehicles and modes of transportation with clean, affordable options and reducing the damage caused by large, commercial agricultural facilities. These two items would likely be undertaken by the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), respectively. According to the FY2020 federal budget,⁸² the requested appropriations for these two departments combined would not cover the projected cost of the Green New Deal's plan to address greenhouse gases.

Green For All provides a cost estimate of \$500 billion for the first year of the ten-year implementation period. Although this estimate is much lower than the Green New Deal's projected costs, the policy's implementation would still require significant fundraising efforts to cover the associated costs without contributing to the national debt.

⁷⁸ Ezrati, Milton, "The Green New Deal And The Cost Of Virtue."

⁷⁹ U.S. Government Publishing Office. *Fiscal Year 2020 Budget*.

⁸⁰ Recognizing the Duty to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong., pp. 5-6, 8, 11

⁸¹ Ezrati, Milton, "The Green New Deal And The Cost Of Virtue"

⁸² U.S. Government Publishing Office. *Fiscal Year 2020 Budget*;

According to the FY2020 budget, USDA would only receive \$20.8 billion and DOT would only receive \$21.4 billion in discretionary funding. Combined, these appropriations fall short of the projected estimate by \$67.8 billion.

One way to raise the funds would be to raise the maximum tax rate to 70 percent, a solution many Progressive Democrats have already expressed support for.⁸³ However, this would present an additional roadblock to implementation, as Green For All will then rely on a restructuring of the existing tax structure before any activities could commence. Funds would therefore have to be raised through other means.

Because of its lack of direction or clarity and the projected expenditures required to achieve all of the stated goals in just ten years' time, the Green New Deal in its current state is not feasible. For these reasons, Green For All provides a more realistic and focused plan to address environmental degradation and economic inequality. Rather than requiring a complete overhaul of current agricultural, economic, industrial, environmental, manufacturing, and labor practices, among others, Green For All will work with existing structures in the interest of efficiency and timeliness.

The pros of Ocasio-Cortez and Markey's Green New Deal proposal are overwhelmingly outweighed by the cons. The proposal could be considered unrealistic or even idealistic due to its broad scope, unclear goals, and high cost. The policy's projected cost, in particular, presents a major roadblock to the proposal's viability. Green For All has reduced the scope of the Green New Deal to provide more focused goals and tangible action-items so that the effects of the policy can be more easily predicted. Green For All has also significantly reduced the expected cost of addressing environmental and social issues through federal spending, preventing the proposed initiatives from adding as much to the growing national debt.

⁸³ Ocasio-Cortez, Alexandria. "Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: The Rookie Congresswoman Challenging the Democratic Establishment." Interview by Anderson Cooper. 60 Minutes. January 6, 2019. Accessed April 20, 2019.

Although Green For All has reduced expectations set by the audacious Green New Deal proposal, the newer plan remains relatively broad and will inevitably be costly. Still, there are several pros that should be addressed. Most notably, the achievement of each of the five policy goals would have major positive effects. The first goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles is expected to slow climate change significantly, in turn preventing natural disasters, destruction of ecosystems, human health-related issues, and even economic losses.⁸⁴ The job-creation goal would have significant positive impacts on individual working-class households, allow for more class mobility, and reduce income inequality.⁸⁵ The third goal of improving infrastructure would increase safety, protect the environment, and create jobs. Ensuring that all Americans have equal access to environmental assets would have positive impacts on employment, the economy, civic engagement, and the environment. Achieving the final goal of reversing and preventing injustices faced by members of disadvantaged and marginalized populations would reduce inequality, increase civic engagement, and empower groups which have been historically underrepresented.

Another benefit of Green For All is its provision of specific action-items. Unlike the Green New Deal, which alludes to numerous, unrelated sub-goals which detract from the main objectives, Green For All's five goals all seek the same overarching purpose: to bring environmental justice to disadvantaged and marginalized communities. Green For All is clear about its plan to provide funding for the replacement of existing public transportation, renovation of buildings, and community-based initiatives in areas populated by disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Green For All's proposed goals are

⁸⁴ Recognizing the Duty to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong., p. 2

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3

also interrelated in a way such that achievement of each individual goal could support the achievement of other goals. For example, the goal of creating well-paying jobs could be at least partially achieved through planned investments in infrastructure and public transportation, rather than necessitating a separate initiative for the achievement of this objective. This is addressed explicitly in the proposal, which states that contracts will be awarded only to firms which actively employ members of the communities which are undergoing improvement.

Finally, Green For All will avoid much of the criticism that the Green New Deal has received due to the latter's lack of specificity, which has allowed critics to nit-pick and project assumptions into their analyses rather than look at the policy objectively. For example, many critics have rendered the Green New Deal invalid based on assumptions that the policy would require the implementation of a Universal Basic Income (UBI), Medicare-for-All, and free college. Of course, none of these items are explicitly stated in the proposal, but without the provision of specific action-items that policymakers and the public can dissect, any analysis of the Green New Deal will necessarily involve analysis of a set of assumptions guided by each entity's own frame of reference. Therefore, any critics who are against the more-controversial principles of UBI, universal health care, and free college might automatically discount the Green New Deal based on the assumption that these items are built-in to the proposal. In reality, these assumptions are based only on the proposal's mention of a "family-sustaining wage,"⁸⁶ provision of "high-quality health care"⁸⁷ to all Americans, and accessibility of "high-quality

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 12

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 13

education, including higher education”⁸⁸ to all Americans. Without specific action-items, the proposal’s main focus is lost, and critics are provided an easy opportunity to base their opposition on assumptions. For this reason, Green For All has eliminated any vague phrasing that might allude to the implementation of other policy goals such as UBI, Medicare-for-All, and free higher education. While these other goals certainly hold merit, they detract from the main focus of this policy proposal and should be considered in a separate proposal so that they do not negatively impact the viability of Green For All. Without mention of these other policy goals within the body of Green For All’s proposal, criticisms regarding any ulterior motives for the policy will be entirely unfounded.

Despite the improvements Green For All has made on the Green New Deal, there are inevitably some cons to consider. While the Green For All proposal outlines a number of activities that are expected to benefit members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities, the potential impact is much less than was intended through the Green New Deal proposal. The Green New Deal anticipated a 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by approaching the goal through more than one sector, a massive switch to clean energy across several industries, full renovation of all existing buildings and addition of new developments to a heightened standard, and more. Furthermore, the Green New Deal did not specifically focus its initiatives on one section of the population but rather chose the audacious goal of transforming human relationships to the environment throughout the United States. Green For All has chosen to pursue similar goals on a much smaller scale, so that fewer Americans will be impacted by the new initiatives.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 11

Additionally, Green For All's projected cost, although much lower than the expected cost of the Green New Deal, presents a major roadblock to the proposal's viability. Even if Green For All's principles raise the support necessary for the policy's passage, it is still not clear where the funding will come from. Ocasio-Cortez and other Progressives have suggested that funds for massive initiatives like her proposal could be obtained through an overhaul of the tax system.⁸⁹ Although the funding necessary for Green For All would not require as drastic of a change, the policy could still experience a bottleneck, as its implementation will have to be stalled until an entirely separate and vastly more unpopular tax policy is proposed, enacted, and implemented. The same bottleneck effect applies to the notion of a carbon tax⁹⁰ which has been brought up as a possible source of funding for the Green New Deal's expenditures. In any case, a carbon tax would hardly cover all of the policy's projected costs and could result in corporations taking their operations overseas. Perhaps this would reduce carbon emissions in the United States, but simply redistributing the problem to other parts of the world (in particular, third-world and developing countries) could hardly be considered successful. This would also directly contrast the proposal's stated goal of creating jobs in the United States.

A final con relates to the continued enforcement of Green For All ideals. It is not clear from the proposal's ten-year plan how the improvements will be maintained after the ten-year implementation period is over. If the policy's initiatives cease completely after ten years, it can be expected that enforcement of compliance will also end unless

⁸⁹ Ocasio-Cortez, Alexandria. "Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: The Rookie Congresswoman." Interview by Anderson Cooper. 60 Minutes.

⁹⁰ Tuladhar, Sugandha D., W. David Montgomery, and Noah Kaufman (2015). "Environmental Policy for Fiscal Reform: Can a Carbon Tax Play a Role?" *National Tax Journal*. 68(1): 179-193.

provisions for indefinite continuation of compliance audits are added to the proposal. Additionally, the renovations will eventually become outdated, suffer damage, or otherwise experience decline. For privately-owned buildings, it is unclear how these inevitable issues will be addressed well into the future. It cannot be expected that private property owners, especially those who are members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities, will be able to maintain renovated buildings according to Green For All standards indefinitely without assistance. Continuous renovation of public transit systems and buildings updated under Green For All's ten-year implementation period will lead to the requirement of continuous expenditures and oversight to maintain the new standard.

In addition to pros and cons, effectiveness must also be considered. In order to do so, the policy should be evaluated to ensure that its proposed methods will be effective in achieving each of its stated goals. Green For All's goals are to: (1) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles by 10%, especially in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized communities; (2) to provide well-paying employment to members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Green For All sponsored projects; (3) to update existing infrastructure and buildings in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans; (4) to ensure that members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities are afforded equal access to environmental benefits such as clean air and water; and (5) to prioritize environmental justice for members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities by remedying existing injustices and introducing protections against further injustices. The following analysis will predict the policy's overall effectiveness by determining the likelihood of attaining these goals through the proposed policy, taking into consideration both pros and cons as

stated above. Success will be measured by the likelihood that Green For All will attain these outcomes, if enacted in its current form.

The proposal suggests that greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced by 10% in ten years by replacing existing public transit systems with clean, sustainable, and affordable alternatives, with a focus on areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized groups. The policy, if enacted, would provide federal funding as incentives for the transportation and vehicle manufacturing industries to re-build existing public transit systems into more sustainable ones. The Green New Deal's stated goal of achieving "net zero greenhouse gas emissions"⁹¹ in just ten years is simply unthinkable. However, Green For All's proposal to achieve a 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in ten years through a transformation of public transit systems is certainly feasible. A study⁹² conducted on the Taipei metro station in Taiwan found that the construction of a large, energy-efficient metro-rail system significantly reduced carbon emissions in the vicinity of the city, had positive health effects on the population of Taipei, and saved the city millions of dollars. The prospect of federal funding could also provide an incentive for vehicle manufacturing and transportation corporations to add clean and affordable vehicle options to their inventories, engage in research and development of better options, and prompt others to follow-suit to keep up with growing market demand for zero-emission vehicles. This approach has been tested in California

⁹¹ Recognizing the Duty to Create a Green New Deal, H.R. Res. 109, 116 Cong., p. 5

⁹² Chen, Yihsu and Alexander Whalley (2012). "Green Infrastructure: The Effects of Urban Rail Transit on Air Quality." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*. 4(1): 58-97

and France, and in both instances, the campaign to create a market for zero-emission vehicles proved successful.⁹³

One potential consequence of replacing existing public transit systems is the potential impact on the automotive market. If the demand for cleaner vehicle options rises enough that vehicle manufacturers begin to provide more zero-emission options, these options might be sold at a premium and targeted to more affluent Americans, exacerbating inequalities in vehicle ownership. This possibility is predicted from the outcomes of the France and California cases, in which only a small percentage of existing vehicles were replaced by zero-emission alternatives.⁹⁴ Even with the financial incentives presented to manufacturers coupled with media campaigns to raise awareness of the subject, the high cost of vehicle ownership and maintenance may result in only the affluent being able to afford the switch. Still, replacing existing public transit systems with cleaner alternatives is not only possible, but is proven to have a significant impact on the air quality in the cities in which these systems are implemented. Green For All's success in achieving this goal will be measure by its ability to reduce overall national greenhouse gas emissions by at least 10% at the end of ten years. Yearly milestones will be measured to ensure that progress is being made; annual success will be measured by the ability to complete at least 150 public transit renovation projects per year for the ten-year implementation period. With at least \$245 billion more being awarded to DOT per year, Green For All is expected to be successful in the completion of these projects.

⁹³ Calef, David and Robert Goble (2007). "The Allure of Technology: How France and California Promoted Electric and Hybrid Vehicles to Reduce Urban Air Pollution." *Policy Sciences*. 40(1): 1-34.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28

Green For All's second goal of creating well-paying jobs is also feasible. The proposal provides a number of opportunities for job creation, such as investments in vehicle manufacturing for public transit systems, construction and renovation projects, and community-based initiatives. The proposal's requirement that funding be awarded only to contractors who employ local workers, pay a livable wage, and are subjected to regular audits will ensure that well-paying jobs are created in areas where Green For All projects are being conducted. This is especially significant because projects will take place in areas highly populated by disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Access to quality jobs in these areas will provide new opportunities for many unemployed or underemployed workers in these communities to find good job, build their resumes, and learn job skills that will assist in future job searches. Assuming that the necessary funding is available, federal investments in the various industries involved in Green For All initiatives will naturally spur growth in each sector, resulting in the continual generation of new jobs for skilled workers. Green For All expects to create at least five-million job-years,⁹⁵ using a formula which estimates that approximately \$92,000 in federal spending creates one job-year.⁹⁶ Green For All's success will be measured by the extent to which it fulfills the expectation of at least five-million job-years created each year during the implementation period. One notable roadblock to lasting change in employment is that Green For All projects will be completed on a contractual basis, meaning that many of the workers hired for completion of the projects might only be employed for the duration

⁹⁵ Executive Office of the President. "Estimates of Job Creation." The White House: President Barack Obama;

the source defines "job-year" as "one job for one year."

⁹⁶ Ibid.

of the contract. However, the skills developed through participation in these projects may still prove to be valuable for future employment.

Green For All's third goal of updating existing infrastructure and buildings in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans is a bit more ambitious. The proposal defines the successful achievement of this goal as completion of at least 5,000 individual building renovation projects within the course of one year. Before projects are started, a set of minimum requirements must be established so that updated buildings can be evaluated according to a uniform standard in regular audits. Additionally, a priority system should be established so that the most urgent cases are addressed first. However, adhering to any standard of priority will be difficult due to the fact that many of the high-priority buildings will inevitably be privately owned. Without a mandate, achieving this goal will require contractors to engage in a level of risk due to private ownership of many of the job sites. Even if the projects are publicly funded, some private owners will be unwilling to stall business or daily life in order to allow a large renovation project to take place.

Furthermore, some of the high-priority sites will be residential communities, such as public or subsidized private low-income housing facilities. Households living in these communities may need to be relocated during project duration; with large-scale projects occurring nationwide, this could pose a major logistical problem of where to move these households while projects are being completed. Another potential problem that might arise from renovating existing residential structures is gentrification. Unless the policy caps real estate prices, there is nothing preventing owners of newly renovated buildings

to raise the cost of rent due to increased property value and evicting lower-income residents from their buildings.

Finally, it is important to consider the major environmental, health, and logistical concerns that would be posed by a massive, nationwide renovation of buildings in disadvantaged and marginalized communities for a period of ten years. Demolition, construction, and renovation activities can be expected to result in pollution, proliferation of hazardous substances once confined inside individual buildings, increased greenhouse gas emissions from heavy-duty construction vehicles, and increased traffic due to road closures and staging of construction equipment. These negative effects would be concentrated in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized groups, which detracts from Green For All's fourth goal of providing equal access to environmental positives such as clean air and water.

The proposal's fourth goal of ensuring that members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities within the United States are afforded equal access to environmental benefits such as clean air and water is unlikely to be effective, at least within the first ten years. Part of the issue lies in the fact that achievement of this goal relies heavily on the successful attainment of the other stated goals. For example, air and water quality can be improved through renovation of existing buildings and related infrastructure. However, as discussed above, these renovation projects are likely to bring about a number of other environmental and health concerns that would counter this effect for the duration of these projects. Once projects are completed, the desired effects of cleaner water and air in these communities could be attained. However, the vehicle emissions, pollution, debris proliferation, and other results of large-scale construction

projects are unlikely to be eliminated immediately after construction, decreasing the likelihood that the fourth goal of Green For All can be effectively addressed. This effect could be countered by the efforts of community-based initiatives which receive funding from Green For All to clean up the areas surrounding renovation sites after completion. Successful achievement of Green For All's fourth goal will be measured by the extent to which community-based organizations are able to effect change locally. Green For All is expected to fund approximately 10,000 community-based initiatives per year during the 10-year implementation period. Success, in this case, simply means that at least 10,000 Green-For-All funded projects will be undertaken to advance the policy's goals each year.

The final goal of prioritizing environmental justice for members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities by remedying existing injustices and introducing protections against further injustices is the most attainable. 100% of projects undertaken as part of Green For All will take place in disadvantaged and marginalized communities. Public transit systems that are replaced using funding from Green For All will be located in areas with high concentrations of historically underrepresented populations. High-priority buildings in these areas will be addressed through renovation projects, allowing for people in disadvantaged and marginalized communities to experience better living and working conditions. However, it is important to consider the short-term costs of a large-scale, nationwide prioritization of projects in disadvantaged and marginalized communities. The replacement of public transportation systems in these communities will have a positive long-term impact, but will have negative short-term effects on those which Green For All seeks to serve. Public transit replacement projects will take time to

complete, and many commuters will be displaced during project completion. The renovation of existing buildings in disadvantaged and marginalized communities has a similar short-term cost: while projects are being completed, members of these communities will likely be the most severely impacted. Buildings located in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans are often in the worst condition. While some individuals and businesses can afford to relocate during renovations, others who are already struggling might find it more difficult to find another place to stay while renovations are taking place.

Overall, Green For All's goals are well-defined and could have a meaningful impact on disadvantaged and marginalized communities, if passed. Planned activities are clearly stated, and it is clear that these activities will support the achievement of the stated goals. Some of the proposal's goals are ambitious, but significant progress can be made in each goal, even if all five are not achieved in their entirety. Any progress in Green For All's five stated goals would have a positive long-term impact on the environment, the economy, and the lives of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans, justifying the costs and short-term consequences associated with the ten-year plan. This policy analysis provides evidence that environmental justice for disadvantaged and marginalized communities can be improved effectively through Green For All initiatives.

Political Analysis

The Green New Deal has already received a great deal of criticism, even in its earliest stages. Critics originate from various positions on the political spectrum, including prominent members of the Democratic Party. Notable concerns include the proposal's breadth, expected costs, and implied connection to other controversial ideas such as UBI, Medicare-for-All, and free college. These criticisms are likely to prevent the

Green New Deal from viability. The Green For All proposal trims down the scope and projected cost, avoiding some of the main criticisms that the Green New Deal has garnered. Additionally, Green For All has eliminated any language that implies connection to other controversial policy ideas. This does not mean that these ideas should not be pursued, but rather suggests that these policy ideas should be addressed separately so as to improve the chances of Green For All's success. Green For All is a more feasible and affordable option that is focused primarily on promoting environmental justice for disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

Green For All's goals for the ten-year implementation period are: (1) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles by 10%, especially in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized communities; (2) to provide well-paying employment to members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Green For All sponsored projects; (3) to update existing infrastructure and buildings in areas with high populations of disadvantaged and marginalized Americans; (4) to ensure that members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities are afforded equal access to environmental benefits such as clean air and water; and (5) to prioritize environmental justice for members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities by remedying existing injustices and introducing protections against further injustices. These goals are derived from the broader and more ambitious Green New Deal proposal released in February 2019 by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) and Senator Ed Markey (D-MA), but have been more clearly defined in terms of promoting environmental justice for disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

The idea of a Green New Deal has not been well-received in Congress so far,⁹⁷ but public opinion leans significantly in support of such a policy initiative. A survey conducted by Yale University just months prior to the release of the February 2019 Green New Deal proposal found that more than 80 percent of registered voters, including a significant majority of registered Republicans supported the notion of a Green New Deal.⁹⁸ Since the release and subsequent defeat of Ocasio-Cortez and Markey's proposal in Congress, public support for a Green New Deal can be expected to fall significantly, especially due to the high projected cost of the proposed activities and unclear scope. Green For All will likely win over some of the support that the Green New Deal will inevitably lose, as some will be disillusioned with the latter's implied ties to controversial policy ideas and high projected costs. Green For All will achieve the positive impacts on the environment, infrastructure, and disadvantaged and marginalized households that were initially well-received by the public, without the massive costs required by the Green New Deal.

Sponsoring Green For All in the House of Representatives would have a positive impact on your political career, as the proposal is consistent with your stated environmental priorities.⁹⁹ This legislation would provide you with an opportunity to

⁹⁷ U.S. Congress. Senate. *A Joint Resolution Recognizing the Duty of the Federal Government to Create a Green New Deal*. By Mitch McConnell. 116 Cong., 1st sess. S. Res. S.J. Res 8. Accessed April 21, 2019.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-joint-resolution/8>;

in February, Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) ironically introduced S.J.Res.8, which was rejected unanimously by the Senate, even among Democrats, who mostly voted "Present."

⁹⁸ Gustafson, Abel, Seth Rosenthal, Anthony Leiserowitz, Edward Maibach, John Kotcher, Matthew Ballew, and Matthew Goldberg. "The Green New Deal Has Strong Bipartisan Support." Yale Program on Climate Change Communication. December 14, 2018. Accessed March 17, 2019.

<http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/the-green-new-deal-has-strong-bipartisan-support/>; many supported the notion of a Green New Deal due to expected positive economic outcomes.

⁹⁹ "Environment." Congressman Frank Pallone. Accessed April 6, 2019.

<https://pallone.house.gov/issues/environment>;

push for change on a larger scale, secure your reelection, impact more lives, and gain a national platform to speak about issues that are important to you. Your constituents would value your sponsorship of Green For All, as New Jersey is home to a number of hazardous waste facilities which have yet to be addressed by the EPA's Superfund cleanup efforts.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, constituents can look forward to the introduction of hundreds of well-paying jobs in areas of New Jersey which will become sites for Green For All projects. You consider job creation and fair wages to be two of your top policy priorities;¹⁰¹ supporting Green For All would certainly aid in your pursuit of these goals for your own community.

If you are considering running for higher office, it is important to note that the Green New Deal has gained a great deal of positive media attention, and it can be expected that its competitor (especially a more feasible alternative such as Green For All) would result in a similar response. Since Green For All can avoid some of the conservative criticisms that attempt to tie the Green New Deal to socialism, this proposal will likely be more popular among lawmakers and therefore more viable. While public opinion still leans in favor of a Green New Deal, drawing attention to a more cost-efficient and politically viable model will likely win support among voters and policymakers. In terms of furthering your political career, supporting a large-scale environmental and social policy initiative such as Green For All would prove critical in

i.e. cleaning up Superfund sites in New Jersey and stimulating the economy through environmental protection

¹⁰⁰ "Search for Superfund Sites Where You Live." EPA. September 13, 2018. Accessed April 7, 2019. <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/search-superfund-sites-where-you-live>.

¹⁰¹ "Issues." Congressman Frank Pallone. Accessed April 7, 2019. <https://pallone.house.gov/issues>.

developing greater name recognition, bringing your policy priorities to the national forefront, and establishing connections with important political allies.

Finally, supporting Green For All will have a positive impact on the target population, even if the policy itself does not pass into law. The Green New Deal proposal's release has already sparked a national discussion about environmental issues and the potential impact that addressing these issues can have on the economy, infrastructure, and more. Proposing Green For All in the House of Representatives will further this discussion, even as the Green New Deal fades into history due to its unviability. Continuing the discussion around growing environmental concerns and introducing the idea of environmental justice to Congress would contribute to the setting of national priorities and potentially spur change on a smaller scale. Drawing national attention to the environmental injustice faced by members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities could lead to the development of a new environmental justice movement to address contemporary issues at the state and local level until the political climate shifts to a point where a broad federal policy such as Green For All can be considered again.

Although the political pros of the Green For All proposal suggest viability in Congress, it is important to consider potential cons to your support of the policy. One major con is, of course, the large price tag associated with the proposal. Green For All is expected to cost approximately \$500 billion each year for ten years. Although this figure is much lower than the cost estimate for the Green New Deal, the impact that this cost would have on the national debt raises concerns for political viability. Additionally, if you support this policy proposal, you may receive criticism from those who are opposed

to increased government spending on social projects, mostly fiscal conservatives. Since the proposal does not specify where funding will come from, you will need to determine a feasible way to raise the additional \$500 billion per year. Any avenue will lead to political consequences; for example, raising the maximum tax rate would require an overhaul of the existing tax structure and create a bottleneck for Green For All's implementation.

Critics may also find fault with Green For All's focus on disadvantaged and marginalized communities, arguing that environmental issues will impact all Americans and not just the groups that Green For All targets. Conservatives will likely deem the proposal another ploy to uplift the poor at the expense of hardworking middle- and upper-class Americans. Voters who are not members of disadvantaged communities might not find this proposal to be as attractive as the Green New Deal because it does not directly impact them. The Green New Deal includes measures that would improve the lives of all Americans, such as the development of more zero-emission vehicles, full renovation of existing buildings nationwide, and conversion to clean energy across the board. Green For All would do little for those who are not members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities, which are the proposal's target population. Likewise, members of Congress who do not represent the needs of these communities will be unlikely to support Green For All for similar reasons.

Meanwhile, Progressives and staunch environmentalists might find the proposal's projected impact to be insufficient relative to the expected outcomes of the Green New Deal. For example, the latter strives for a 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, a large-scale conversion to clean energy, renovation of all existing buildings and addition

of new “green” buildings, and more. Green For All is slated to achieve only a fraction of these goals, albeit in a more focused and pragmatic manner. Ultimately, providing an alternative to the Green New Deal could spur further division within the Democratic Party, as Progressive members may continue to support the Green New Deal while more moderate or conservative Democrats may choose to back Green For All. With a controversial Republican President seeking re-election in 2020 and a GOP-controlled Senate, unity within the Democratic Party could prove to be crucial to winning more Senate seats, keeping control over the House of Representatives, and preventing Donald Trump from re-election.

Finally, proponents of small government and deregulation will find the audits for Green For All sponsored projects to be unnecessary. This is especially a concern in the long-term, as the proposal is unclear what will be done to address renovated buildings years into the future as they inevitably decline and require upgrades. Not only might this require additional spending for an indefinite period of time, but it would imply that some privately owned buildings which were renovated under Green For All might also undergo regulatory audits, resulting in a level of oversight that many voters and policymakers, especially conservatives who are in favor of reduced bureaucracy, will not likely support.

Overall, supporting Green For All will benefit your career by providing you with a national platform you currently lack. If you have ambitions for higher office, it is imperative for you to become vocal about a large-scale policy initiative such as Green For All. Even if you do not plan to run for higher office, the proposal’s plans will be popular among your constituents, who will benefit from upgrades to infrastructure and public transit, as well as community-based initiatives which will improve the lives of

disadvantaged and marginalized populations. Your constituents have consistently voted for Democratic candidates in the recent past;¹⁰² Green For All would provide a tangible way to directly give back to the members of your community who have supported you and other Democratic candidates. You will also have an opportunity to grow your local base by earning the support of constituents who might not have voted in the past. Green For All seeks to uplift and empower members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities to become more engaged in the dialogue surrounding the policymaking process. It is likely that since Green For All is specifically targeted toward these populations, voter turnout in favor of you and other Democratic candidates who support the proposal will rise.

Ultimately, the attainment of each of Green For All's goals would have a positive impact on the environment, the economy, and the lives of members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities, justifying the political costs and risk of unviability associated with the ten-year plan. The overarching objective of Green For All is to promote environmental justice, which has been defined as: equal protection from environmental negatives, equal access to environmental benefits, and equal opportunity for participation in environmental stewardship and decision-making. Green For All offers members of disadvantaged and marginalized communities with all three of these components of environmental justice and is, at the very least, a step in the right direction.

Recommendation

Although Green For All's viability is questionable given the current division in Congress, it would be beneficial to your political career to support the proposal anyway.

¹⁰² "New Jersey's 6th Congressional District Election, 2018." Ballotpedia. Accessed April 20, 2019. https://ballotpedia.org/New_Jersey's_6th_Congressional_District_election,_2018.

Lawmakers from all over the political spectrum have expressed that they are aware of the need to address important issues such as climate change, jobs, and the economy. While the controversial but comprehensive Green New Deal proposal has presented a solution to many of these concerns, critics have agreed that it comes at much too high a price. Green For All seeks to address some of the same issues, but with emphasis on the communities which need the most federal support. As presented in the analyses above, it is unlikely that the Green New Deal will be able to pass given current political tensions and the growing national debt. Green For All will likely become a more popular alternative to those who truly want to address environmental and social problems through large-scale projects in disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

Your own Congressional district is certainly a good place to start promoting the idea. Although there is not much reason to worry about losing New Jersey's 6th district to a Republican candidate, you should consider the threat of young, up-and-coming Progressive candidates who will most certainly support large-scale initiatives like the Green New Deal or Green For All. One must look no farther than New York's 14th Congressional District, in which popular incumbent Democrat Joe Crowley was ousted by none other than Progressive candidate Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, co-author of the Green New Deal proposal discussed herein. Ocasio-Cortez' overwhelming popularity will no doubt encourage other young, charismatic Progressives to run for office, threatening the seats of Democratic incumbents who are perceived to be too traditional or unwilling to take risks in the name of change.

While you must not ignore the potential competition from young, up-and-coming Progressive candidates, it is imperative that you do not spur further division in the

Democratic Party. Progressives have been criticized from members of both parties for their perceived idealism and naivete. This is dangerous behavior for Democrats to engage in, especially as an important election approaches. Rather than discarding the notion of a sweeping federal policy to address environmental and social issues, Democrats who oppose the Green New Deal should consider supporting an alternative with similar objectives such as Green For All. This way, it does not appear that there is a rift between the ideals of “traditional” Democrats and their Progressive counterparts. Instead, it will appear that the reason many Democrats cannot support the Green New Deal is not based on ideological differences, but practicality. When you promote this policy, you can address this in a straightforward manner by emphasizing that you believe the Green New Deal is a great idea, but that it will not be feasible at this time, hence your proposal of a viable alternative which will still address some of the issues but will actually achieve something since it is more likely to pass.

As discussed in the analyses above, it is questionable if Green For All is viable to begin with, even despite the major modifications, increased clarity, and reduced costs of this proposal relative to the Green New Deal. Although the policy may ultimately be rejected in Congress, the political benefits of supporting this proposal are plenty. This is your opportunity to establish yourself on a national platform, push issues that matter to a majority of Americans, and set national priorities by continuing the discussion on environmental justice long after the Green New Deal inevitably fails.

Curriculum Vitae

Name	Hannah Garber
Date of Birth	December 25, 1994
Place of Birth	Greenville, South Carolina, USA
Current Residence	Alexandria, Virginia, USA

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Co-Founder and Executive Director of Environmental Justice Alliance, a non-profit organization based in Northern Virginia which seeks to promote environmental justice through community-based initiatives
- Accomplished career consisting of roles in finance and administration, business development, and organizational leadership
- Years of dedication to community-based projects and volunteer work, especially with children and other at-risk individuals

EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins University (September 2016-May 2019)
Master of Public Management Candidate
Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Advanced Academic Programs

Presbyterian College (September 2012-May 2016)
Bachelor of Political Science
Summa cum laude, Honors in Political Science

HONORS AND AWARDS

Departmental honors for original research
“Education: The Antidote to Welfare Dependency?”
Departmental honors awarded upon graduation from Presbyterian College
May 2016

Member of Pi Sigma Alpha – the National Political Science Honor Society
Inducted in 2015

Member of Phi Alpha Theta – the National History Honor Society
Inducted in 2016

Member of Omicron Delta Kappa – the National Leadership Honor Society
Inducted in 2016

Presbyterian College Presidential Fellows
Fellowship duration: 2012-2016
One of six finalists in the Quattlebaum-Griffith scholarship competition

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

“Green For All: Modifying Green New Deal to Promote Environmental Justice in the United States”

Johns Hopkins University

Graduate Capstone Project – May 2019

Policy memo addressed to Rep. Frank Pallone encouraging the support of a modified version of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’ Green New Deal proposal in order to promote environmental justice for disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

“Overcoming the Obstacles to the Implementation of a Vocational Education Option in American Public Schools”

Johns Hopkins University

Proseminar Research Paper – December 2016

Original comparative analysis of public education in countries with strong vocational education programs in secondary schools versus the United States’ educational structure.

“The United States Social Safety Net: Origins and Outcomes”

Presbyterian College

Independent Research Project – May 2016

Over 30 pages of historiography and historical research conducted independently under the guidance of a faculty adviser from the History Department of Presbyterian College.

“The Great Recession and the ‘New Poor’”

Presbyterian College

Undergraduate Capstone Project – December 2015

Approximately 30 pages of original empirical research conducted independently under the guidance of a faculty adviser from the Political Science Department of Presbyterian College.

“Education: The Antidote to Welfare Dependency?”

Presbyterian College

Honors Research Project – October 2015

Over 30 pages of original empirical research conducted independently under the guidance of a faculty adviser. Research demonstrated proficiency with statistical analysis; departmental honors were awarded as a result of this endeavor.