



The Stone Soup Leadership Institute's SustainWDN™

Policy Analysis & Compatibility to the Biden-Sanders Unity Taskforce Recommendations Combating the Climate Crisis and Pursuing Environmental Justice December 2020

INTRODUCTION

Policy, The Green New Deal, and a Youth-Centered Works Program

Since our founding, **Sustainable Workforce Development** has been at the heart of our mission and a core competency of **The Stone Soup Leadership Institute (The Institute)**. Our youth-centered career programs align with the Green New Deal and aim to prepare the next generation to combat the climate crisis and work towards achieving environmental justice through influencing process and policy. We need to empower and equip our future workforce with the tools to succeed in the 21st century world. The Institute is proud to be training, mentoring, supporting, and shining a light on the next generation of talented, multicultural youth leaders in the sustainability movement.

Trevor Tanaka is one of our exemplary youth leaders, who changed the way sustainability is taught in his home state of Hawaii. Sensing that there was a lack of environmental instruction for him and his peers, Trevor fought tooth and nail to get a sustainable education requirement passed in his school. For nearly a decade, The Institute has been highlighting the work of amazing youth like Trevor, who are doing amazing things in sustainability that can influence policy around the world. It all starts with one program, one school, one policy – one student. The Institute's annual Sustainability Summit, toolkits, books, lesson plans, career mentoring, and workforce development programs through SustainWDN™, all hope to make an impact on the way we govern sustainability for the next generation of youth leaders.

We work towards creating strong training networks in combination with a robust technical infrastructure. With the ambitious Green New Deal policy goals as a guidepost, we strive to effectively provide innovative educational and workforce solutions for the multicultural youth in our local communities who are struggling to find opportunities that support these policies.

SustainWDN™ is our cutting-edge digital workforce development network that is aimed at providing youth from historically marginalized backgrounds a pathway to high-paying technical jobs and internships in the world of sustainability. We are eager to scale this platform to reach more schools and businesses nationwide, and are partnering with forward-thinking allies across industries to help aid the youth who are eager to expand their passion for sustainable living to green careers including: Progressive educators and career counselors; Libraries & home-schoolers seeking educational resources for bi-lingual learners; and Schools in need of STEM resources to supplement their curriculum. We are also partnered with an extensive team of Ph.D.s, MBAs, universities, businesses across the green-blue sectors, environmental organizations, educational institutions, technical and vocational programs, and most importantly, motivated and dedicated youth across the country who are interested in uniting for a more equitable and sustainable future.

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INFLUENCING POLICY THROUGH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

At the core aim of the Biden-Harris white paper is an America-First, green infrastructure and manufacturing program. Titled the Unity Task Force plans to deploy large-scale, centrally planned investments in domestic sustainability projects; these investments include modernizing blue-green infrastructure, expanding the ubiquity of clean energy products (wind, solar, steel, cement), and allocating funds to educational, technical, and vocational developmental programs that are weighted towards historically marginalized communities - which have been hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic, and are disproportionately struggling with health outcomes, virtual schooling, and a decline in available employment opportunities across the board. The Unity Task Force has language and carve-outs specifically for these communities. This urgent call-to-action has highlighted the need for The Institute to fast-track and expand our sustainable tech, workforce development, and education tools with this opportunity at hand, so these tools can reach these communities that need it most during these trying times.

SPECIFIC POINTS OF POLICY

There are multiple opportunities for programs like SustainWDN™ to influence future policy, specifically as it relates to the revamped Civilian Conservation Corps (technical training, higher pay, uplifting underrepresented youth, incorporating STEM educational components to the CCC mandate).. Specific language where we align with policy is highlighted below, called out by its page number in the Unity Taskforce PDF, which can be found at the following link <https://joebiden.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/UNITY-TASK-FORCE-RECOMMENDATIONS.pdf> . For brevity's sake, we have highlighted some key parts of the document that pertain to policy points aimed at increasing technical and educational programs for under-privileged communities:

* **PAGE 25 - Educators have always been heroes.** The COVID-19 pandemic has made the value that educators provide to children, parents, and the economy obvious as never before to tens of millions of Americans. Public school educators should have the same rights to organize, join a union, and collectively bargain as private sector workers. Democrats will fight to significantly increase pay and benefits for all educators, in order to help recruit, retain, and reward high-quality teachers and support professionals.

We will support programs to help introduce high school students to the teaching profession, enable school support staff to climb the professional ladder within schools, and recruit a diverse educational workforce through partnerships with historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving and other minority-supporting institutions, and tribal colleges and universities.

PAGE 2 - We will dramatically expand solar and wind energy deployment through community-based and utility-scale systems. Within five years, we will install 500 million solar panels, including eight million solar roofs and community solar energy systems, and 60,000 made-in-America wind turbines.

PAGE 16 - We will support proven workforce development programs such as registered apprenticeships and community college training partnerships that help workers access higher-paying jobs. We will invest in the caring workforce, including by directing significant funding to state and local governments to retain and hire more teachers, public health professionals, nurses, home care workers, social workers, and other critical positions.

PAGE 41 - Democrats support policies and programs to make it easier for qualified immigrants and their families to become full and equal citizens, including increasing funding for culturally appropriate immigrant inclusion and citizenship services, legal support, English classes and bilingual education, workforce development, and adult education.

PAGE 43 - The Unity Task Force supports investing in the education and training of underrepresented groups, including people of color, low-income individuals, women, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and unemployed energy workers, for jobs in clean energy-related industries. The clean energy field must represent the diversity of America.

PAGE 44 - Prioritize a More Diverse, Inclusive Workforce. Build a more inclusive clean energy workforce that is representative of America and younger workers entering the job market. Accelerate EPA's environmental workforce job training program.

KEY LANGUAGE & MESSAGING -

It's important to focus on keywords and verbiage when considering who, what, and how a policy is intended - especially in a document where there is very little in the way of statistical analysis in the document; meaning, in this instance, narrative is king. The Unity Task Force uses standard Progressive language, colored heavily with intersectional and critical race verbiage (environmental justice, climate justice, systemic racism, diversity-equity-inclusion, gender, etc.). Please see below, where we have called out the language used most frequently in the Unity Task Force PDF:

Clean - 107 instances in document	Change - 36 instances in document
Justice - 85 instances in document	Equity - 34 instances in document
Climate - 85 instances in document	Race - 34 instances in document
Unity - on 69 PAGES	Gender - 22 instances in document
Systems - on 70 PAGES - systemic racism	Latino - 17 instances in document
(10), misconduct, disparities	Disproportionate - 21 instances in document
LGBTQ - 16 instances in document	Discrimination - 20 instances in document
Build - on 46 PAGES	Diversity - 21 instances
Communities - on 64 PAGES	Heroes - 4 instances
Black - 49 instances in document	

IN SUMMARY

The Institute is uniquely positioned to meet the goals and find solutions to the issues presented in the Unity Task Force PDF. Lifting up this country's most vulnerable populations is a core tenet of these collective policies and programs - and it has been a core tenet of our work for nearly two decades. Our decorated network of multicultural youth are leading the way towards a re-imagined future, where sustainability and environmental justice are at the forefront of the conversation. The domestic infrastructure, manufacturing, and workforce development plans featured in the Unity Task Force PDF can benefit greatly from a partnership with The Institute, a leader in sustainable education and workforce development. This is a tremendous opportunity to reform our society on greater ideals than we have in the past, and it will require an equally great coalition of people to help us live up to these ideals. In that spirit, we would be honored to have you join our Sustainability Advisory Council and help guide the institute in creating a more sustainable future for our at-risk youth.

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