

# ONE COUNTRY

## RURAL ROADMAP: CLEAN ENERGY

### Background:

As climate change continues to have devastating impacts on the agriculture industry and supply chains across the globe, more countries and communities are embracing clean energy as part of the solution and as a significant economic opportunity. Rural communities are well positioned to become a key part of the growing clean energy economy.

- The renewable energy sector currently employs over 777,000 people in the U.S., with bioenergy leading the way in employment.
- Despite the pandemic-induced economic slowdown, renewable energy capacity jumped 45% in 2020 and was the only energy source for which demand increased.
- Clean energy is expected to expand 50% by 2024 as solar, wind, and hydropower projects gain popularity exponentially across the globe.



Source: Sungrow EMEA

# Why Clean Energy is Important for Rural America

Rural America has a tremendous opportunity to lead the way on clean energy and create hundreds of thousands of jobs while doing it. Clean energy offers rural communities a chance to diversify their economies by installing renewable energy systems, producing biofuels, incorporating clean energy into their existing business models, and more. Non-metro areas across the country could see immense benefits:

1

World Resources Institute found that a \$55 billion investment into the new climate economy over five years would create nearly 260,000 good-paying rural jobs and add \$21.7 billion annually to rural economies.

2

Clean energy provides new economic opportunity for traditional energy communities that are increasingly facing plant retirement and job loss. With federal support, workers will be able to transition their skills to the growing renewable energy economy.

3

Renewable energy provides indirect benefits to rural communities by providing additional income to farmers and landowners or reducing energy bills for rural households by 25%.

4

Clean energy will also help address the growing threat of climate change, which is devastating rural communities and harming ranchers and farmers' bottom lines.

# Clean Energy is Already Having an Impact on Rural Communities

Many rural communities are already at the frontlines of the green economy, using federal support and assistance to embrace renewable energy, energy efficiency, and other climate-friendly projects to reap the financial and environmental benefits:

- In New Mexico, Matthew Draper, who runs a small farm, is **using a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to install a solar power array**, which will generate enough electricity to power his farm sustainably.
- In Texas, local governments are conducting **bioenergy and energy efficiency site assessments to help agricultural producers install renewable energy systems** that would lower energy costs and increase profits.
- In Wisconsin, a grain farm in Glen Haven is **installing an energy-efficient grain dryer to save money** and replace over 50% of their energy usage per year.



Source: Jim Witkowski

# Policy Solutions: Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act

The recently passed **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)** includes multiple clean energy provisions, including:

- **\$65 billion** in total investments to build **a more resilient energy grid** that can transfer clean renewable energy more efficiently from the production site to where the energy will be consumed.
- **\$62 billion** in total investments in the **clean energy and manufacturing** sector.
- **\$7 billion to develop the supply chain** for raw materials, manufacturing, delivery, and recycling of energy efficient battery technology.
- **\$1.5 billion for clean hydrogen production and recycling research.**
- **\$750 million** in grants to create clean energy manufacturing projects in **coal communities.**
- **\$500 million** investment in energy efficient and renewable programs in **public school buildings.**
- **\$5 billion** to replace diesel buses with **electric school buses.** This program will also significantly **reduce childhood asthma** in poor and rural communities.

# Policy Solutions: Build Back Better Act

The **Build Back Better Act** passed by the House includes \$555 billion for climate change and clean energy investments, including:

- **\$16 billion** to help rural electric cooperatives, rural businesses, and farmers **transition to clean energy**, increase energy efficiency, and improve biofuel infrastructure and market access.
- **A \$300 billion extension and expansion of clean energy tax credits** to support clean energy investments and deployment, improve energy efficiency, and encourage vehicle electrification to help combat climate change.
- **\$29 billion to create the new Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund** that will enable nonprofit, state, and local climate finance institutions to leverage private-sector investments and rapidly deploy low- and zero-emission technologies, including zero-emission vehicle supply equipment, with at least 40 percent of investments in low-income and disadvantaged communities.
- **Accelerates the clean energy transition** by funding grants, rebates, and loans to commercialize emerging clean energy technologies, reinvest in energy communities, support state and local climate pollution reduction plans, and reduce methane emissions and waste from oil and natural gas operations.

# Build Back Better Act Continued

- Multiple transportation programs, including: **high-speed rail projects** that would **reduce reliance on higher-emission cars and planes**; grant programs to integrate low-carbon materials into transportation projects and develop low-emission aviation fuels and technology; Community Climate Incentive Grants to help states and localities pursue carbon reduction strategies in the transportation area; and funding for sustainable port infrastructure and **supply chain resilience**.
- **\$12.5 billion** in grants and loans to support **domestic auto manufacturing**, clean heavy-duty vehicles and zero-emissions vehicle infrastructure.
- **\$9 billion to electrify the federal and U.S. Postal Service vehicle fleets**.
- **\$19 billion in home energy efficiency and electrification rebates for consumers**, advanced technology to reduce emissions in energy-intensive industrial and manufacturing facilities, and new high-capacity transmission lines for reliable delivery of clean energy.
- **Accelerates climate and clean energy research and development**, including climate science, weather observation and forecasting, wildfire and hurricane research, climate-smart agricultural innovation and adaptation, and clean energy demonstration projects.



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