OUR EARTH IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR

2019 Plan of Action
DEAR FRIENDS,
In a year when political and environmental events seem to be both progressing at a dizzying pace and on the brink of massive change, it is worth taking stock of where we’ve been and where we’re headed in the next two years.

Following the disastrous 2016 elections, LCV created a four-year strategic plan to break polluters’ hold on American politics and position the U.S. to take bold action on climate change by 2021. With scientists warning that we have perhaps a decade to completely overhaul our energy systems or face untold human suffering, we know that this is the fight of our lives. And we have no time to lose.

LCV’s 2017-2020 strategic plan seeks to do four key things: DEFEND environmental safeguards at the federal level, ADVANCE environmental and clean energy progress in the states, ELECT pro-environment leaders at every level of government, and BUILD a more racially and demographically diverse movement and electorate that can win transformative change. If we succeed, we will build the power needed to forge a path toward a healthy, sustainable, and just future for our planet and all who live here.

Midway through our four-year plan, I am hopeful about what we’ve accomplished. Thanks to our committed partners and millions of supporters—and the record number of voters who said enough is enough—we made real gains in 2017 and 2018. Despite the most anti-environment president and Congress in modern times, we blocked nearly all efforts to erode core laws that protect our air, land, water, and health. With state LCVs, our Clean Energy for All campaign secured commitments from over 600 winning elected officials to a goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2050. We’re building a larger movement of people that looks more like America and is motivated to create a just, equitable environmental future for all. And we helped mobilize a wave of voters who delivered a stinging rebuke to the Trump agenda and elected a historically diverse, pro-environment majority in the U.S. House and to state and local offices.

Our work is far from over. In fact, we must now recommit to this fight like never before, as the current moment will chart a course with profound implications for our future. LCV has ambitious plans in 2019 to push leaders in the states and Congress to adopt bold clean energy policies, move presidential primary candidates to compete on climate change, and to win pro-environment majorities and the presidency in 2020—and we urgently need your support to reach our goals. If the last two years have made anything clear, it is that threats to our environment and democracy are inseparable, and that we must protect the right to vote. We will not solve the many environmental challenges we face without first winning the politics. Our core strategies are holding leaders accountable, securing strong policies, and winning elections.

Even in the face of dire warnings, it is not too late to change the current trajectory and preserve a livable planet for ourselves and future generations. We are all connected, and none of us can do this alone. All of us at LCV thank you, because YOU make this work possible. I hope you agree that our Earth is worth fighting for and will continue to stand with LCV in 2019.

Onward,

Gene Karpinski
LCV President
All 30 state LCVs in our network are working on this nationwide campaign to push state and local leaders to adopt bold policies that will reduce pollution, ensure access to clean energy for all communities, and build unstoppable momentum for federal action on climate change. In 2018, we secured commitments to the goal of 100 percent clean energy from over 600 winning elected officials at every level of government, including 56 new members of Congress, 10 new governors, and over 550 state and local elected officials.

With state LCVs and our grassroots supporters, we will push elected leaders to enact sweeping clean energy policies in 2019 and promote equitable investments in low-income communities most impacted by pollution and climate change. In addition to the pro-environment governors who took office in January, six states—Colorado, Illinois, Maine, New Mexico, New York and Nevada—have new “trifectas” with a pro-environment governor, state senate and legislature. We will aim to win significant progress in these states and others such as Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Nebraska, Oregon and Virginia.

We will also push the newly transformed U.S. House of Representatives to take bold and immediate actions that can shift the narrative on climate change and tee up legislation for when we will have a pro-environment Congress and president in 2021.
Even before the 2018 elections, the many cities and states that pledged to meet the carbon reductions in the Paris climate agreement represent 40 percent of the U.S. population and, taken together, are the equivalent of the third largest economy in the world. State LCVs across the country have helped win important commitments to renewable energy. Six states now have 50 percent or higher Renewable Energy Standards. This includes New Jersey, where our state affiliate won a commitment to 100 percent clean energy from Governor Phil Murphy prior to his 2017 election victory and has since been instrumental in advancing progress on offshore wind, climate, and renewable energy.
At the state and local level we will:

> **Double the number of states requiring that at least 50 percent** of their energy comes from renewables such as wind and solar. We will run robust campaigns in Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Nevada and New Mexico and push for 100 percent clean energy in New Jersey and Washington.

> **Work to limit carbon pollution** in states like Colorado, Oregon and Virginia.

> **Support strong executive action** by newly-elected governors, such as pushing them to join the U.S. Climate Alliance, commit to offshore wind, limit methane emissions, invest in zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure, and establish offices of environmental justice and climate change.

> **Expand access to solar** by enacting community solar programs in states like Maine, Nevada and New Mexico, and by lifting the net metering cap and increasing solar incentives in Michigan and South Carolina.

> **Strengthen utility commitments** to expand wind and solar. This includes holding utilities accountable to their clean energy commitments in Michigan, developing plans to transition from coal power in Colorado, Illinois, Maryland and New Mexico, and working with new members on the Omaha and Nebraska Public Power Boards to transition the state to 100 percent clean energy.

> **Generate public commitments from candidates running for local, state and national office** to adopt the goal of 100 percent clean energy and to lead on Day One if elected.

Transforming the U.S. House

LCV Victory Fund and affiliated entities invested over $80 million to help elect pro-environment leaders up and down the ballot in 2017-2018—the largest investment by any single-issue group. Our efforts succeeded in helping elect almost 60 new members of Congress and flipping the U.S. House to a pro-environment majority. This new majority is the most diverse in history with more people of color, more women, more LGBTQ+ people and other members from historically under-represented groups than ever before, many of whom ran and won on strong environmental platforms in competitive districts.
In 2019, LCV will work with the new pro-environment House majority to drive the debate on clean energy and climate, re-engage the public, and lay the groundwork for federal action by 2021.

In Congress, we will:

> Urge House leaders to put climate change front and center. Speaker Pelosi has already taken steps to make climate change a priority in 2019. We will work with members of Congress who have joined calls for a Green New Deal to push bold plans to create good jobs and accelerate a just transition to a clean energy economy.

> Work with new and longtime environmental champions. The 116th Congress includes 56 new members who are committed to LCV’s Clean Energy for All campaign goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2050, including leaders like Colorado’s Joe Neguse, California’s Mike Levin, New York’s Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and many others.

> Promote oversight and accountability of the Trump administration and polluters. The new House majority has the power to investigate polluters’ influence on agencies like the EPA and the Department of the Interior. We will work with leaders to hold members of the administration accountable for unethical behaviors and policies that put industry profits over people.

> Drive legislation for 2021. While the U.S. will ultimately need pro-climate leaders in the Senate and the White House to enact transformative legislative policies, the new House majority is committed to combating the climate crisis and building a just clean energy future for all. We will seize this momentum to craft a winning narrative, cultivate a core group of champions, build public support, and increase trust with allies to lay the groundwork to move ambitious and equitable climate legislation in 2021.

“LCV has been a leader of the movement to protect our environment and get elected officials to act on climate change. We need them in the fight for our future and I’m proud to stand alongside them in this battle.”
- U.S. Representative Andy Kim, NJ-03
As climate change rapidly escalates into the single greatest threat to the health and safety of communities across the planet, the U.S. must reassume a role of leadership on the world stage. In 2019, we must do everything possible to lay the groundwork to elect a pro-environment president who will take aggressive action to tackle the climate crisis on Day One.

The 2020 presidential election—and the long presidential primary process leading up to it—is already underway. A wide-open Democratic primary could see more than a dozen credible candidates—as well as a possible Republican primary challenge to the incumbent. As candidates announce their intentions, LCV’s goal is to ensure that there is a “race to the top” on climate during the primary process.

In 2019, LCV will embark on a campaign, Change the Climate 2020, to raise the climate crisis as a pressing political issue and ensure that addressing it is a top priority for the next president.

The 2020 presidential primary race presents a tremendous opportunity to elevate the importance of climate change in the public debate. LCV will run a major effort to engage with candidates in the early caucus and primary states and inject discussion of climate change and solutions into presidential campaigns, pressing candidates to take a strong public stance on climate change solutions.
Our goals are to:

1. Elevate climate action as a top-tier issue in the run-up to the presidential primaries
2. Ensure that candidates make addressing the climate crisis a top priority
3. Position the eventual nominee to take ambitious action in January 2021

We will:

> Organize in early-voting primary states. In New Hampshire, South Carolina, Nevada and other early-in-the-calendar states, we will create a visible presence at campaign events, organize volunteers to question candidates, and mobilize grassroot activists and local businesses.

> Mobilize LCV members and supporters to elevate the issue in interactions with candidates, including asking questions at events and voicing their priorities. We will also encourage donors to raise the issue directly with candidates they support and provide a toolkit to do so.

> Educate the media. We will tell people-focused stories to highlight the urgency and impacts of the climate crisis, show how solutions are popular and beneficial to our economy, health and justice, and rebut arguments that solutions require steep economic tradeoffs.

> Engage directly with candidates. We will brief all candidates and their campaigns on policy, share relevant polling data, hold candidate forums, and generate commitments to strong climate solutions.

> Highlight the role of local environmental impacts on elections. Recent polling has shown how local environmental concerns resonated with voters and played a key role in close races in 2018. As more and more of the public experience the dangerous effects of climate change, we will urge the use of localized messaging tying these impacts to the actions (or lack of action) of their representatives in Washington, DC.
WIN PRO-ENVIRONMENT MAJORITIES AND THE PRESIDENCY

Elections are a key part of LCV’s and affiliated entities’ strategy to ensure that leaders pass and enact pro-environment policies.

Strong policies are only possible when individuals who will fight for our Earth are in power, and when those individuals are elected and bolstered.

In 2019, we will pursue opportunities to establish pro-environment legislative majorities in Virginia, strengthen majorities in New Jersey, and work in special legislative elections in numerous states.

In addition to our work on key state and local elections, in 2019, our movement will build towards our strategic plan goal of winning the presidency and establishing pro-environment majorities in Congress and state capitals in 2020.

We will launch preparations for significant on-the-ground and national electoral operations, including efforts to establish a pro-environment Senate and defend the new pro-environment majority in the U.S. House. As we did in 2018, we will ensure that candidates make tackling climate change a centerpiece of their platforms, put forward strong plans on clean energy, and commit to make this an immediate priority upon taking office.

The work to elect a pro-environment 46th president, pro-environment House and Senate majorities, and more green governors and state legislatures starts NOW.
We will:

> **Pick up key state legislative seats in 2019.** In Virginia, we need to pick up just two seats in the House and Senate to establish a pro-clean energy trifecta. In New Jersey, we will work to elect new clean energy leaders to the Assembly in order to give Governor Phil Murphy the legislative support he needs to deliver on his commitment to 100 percent clean energy by 2050.

> **Focus on local races with big impacts.** From utility boards to port commissions, state LCVs have helped secure progress by winning local races with outsized impacts on clean energy. We will continue to strategically invest in local races in 2019. For example, in Nebraska, where we recently helped flip two key power boards, we will look to make gains in mayoral and city council races that can shift the energy balance in this plains state. In Washington and Oregon, we will build on a successful track record engaging in city, county, and port races to stop dirty fossil fuels.

> **Elect more green governors and state legislators.** We will elect new green governors in states like Montana and protect champions like Roy Cooper in North Carolina. We will also seek to flip legislative bodies such as the North Carolina House, Pennsylvania Assembly, and Minnesota Senate to ensure that governors can move forward on proactive clean energy solutions, and protect and grow state legislative majorities in preparation for redistricting in 2021.

> **Defend allies in the U.S. House.** The current freshman House class is the most diverse ever elected and includes clean energy leaders, environmental justice advocates, and national security experts. We will work to ensure that climate remains a winning issue as we prepare to defend new members in competitive districts and elect even more climate champions in 2020.

> **Win a pro-environment U.S. Senate.** In 2017-2018, we fulfilled a key part of our strategic plan by holding the “green firewall” in the Senate. We also picked up new pro-environment seats in Alabama, Arizona, and Nevada, setting ourselves up for a more favorable Senate map in 2020. In 2019, we will begin to build the operation needed to win a pro-environment Senate in 2020.

> **Provide direct support to pro-environment candidates through GiveGreen.** In 2017-2018, the GiveGreen program, which is a project of LCV Victory Fund, NextGen America and NRDC Action Fund PAC, raised or contributed over $23 million in direct contributions to pro-environment candidates. This program is a key part of ensuring that we continue to elect candidates who will fight for climate action.

> **Defeat Donald Trump and elect a president who will act on climate change on Day One.** Trump and his administration have proved to be the dirtiest in our country’s history, abandoning U.S. leadership in the global fight against climate change, eliminating protections for public lands, and rolling back the clean air and water safeguards that make our communities safe and healthy places to live. In 2020, we will fight to unseat this polluter in chief.

In 2017-2018, new leaders such as Xochitl Torres Small (NM-02), Abigail Spanberger (VA-07), and Lauren Underwood (IL-14), and inspired voters to turn out in record numbers in U.S. House districts that have not typically backed pro-environment candidates. They reflect a growing grassroots movement demanding better representation and accountability from their elected leaders and herald a powerful change in Congress that we must sustain and grow in 2020.
LCV plays an essential role in the environmental movement, with unmatched political acumen and expertise. I’ve seen firsthand how effective this organization can be, from defeating constant attacks on our most bedrock environmental laws in D.C. to mobilizing millions across the country to effectively engage in the political process. LCV knows the most strategic way to move the levers of power to protect our air, land, water and health."

- Carol Browner, EPA Administrator 1993-2001 and LCV Board Chair
HERE ARE THE CHANGES YOUR SUPPORT CAN MAKE

- **$5,000** Send email alerts to mobilize activists on a key issue for one month.
- **$15,000** Conduct a tele-town hall with a member of Congress or other official to educate and engage 10,000 people at the grassroots level.
- **$70,000** Hold our annual national lobby day and youth organizers’ academy, which brings state LCVs and key supporters to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress.
- **$150,000** Help a state league partner win a key state legislative seat and change control to a pro-environment majority.
- **$200,000** Produce, distribute, and promote LCV’s signature publication, the National Environmental Scorecard, which evaluates how every member of Congress votes on key environmental, energy, and health measures.
- **$250,000** Place digital ad buys to mobilize citizens and generate media that highlights the work of environmental champions in Congress and increases pressure on pro-polluter politicians.
- **$400,000** Launch an innovative program with our state partners to recruit, develop, and support women and candidates of color at every level of public office who can excite voters and be strong champions for fighting climate change.
- **$500,000** Build community organizing programs that enhance the power of low-income and communities of color to achieve climate justice, community health, and environmental protection.
- **$1 MILLION** Run an aggressive Change the Climate 2020 campaign in presidential primary states to elevate climate change as a top-tier priority among the candidates through polling, organizing, digital communications, and media engagement.
- **$2 MILLION** Support state-level advocacy campaigns for 100 percent clean energy through grassroots, online, and media tactics to pressure state leaders to take action on climate change.