

POWER

PEOPLE'S ENERGY SUMMIT

A TOOLKIT



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WWW.POWERINTERFAITH.ORG

CREDITS

Co-chairs Climate Justice and Jobs Team:

Russell Hicks, Nancy Wygant

Co-conveners of the PUC Campaign:

Wendy Greenspan, Charmaine Butler

PUC Campaign Leaders:

David Clowney, Pamela Darville, Bill Cozzens, Linda Clark

Lead Staff Organizers:

Jana Korn, Nora Elmarzouky

Climate Justice Fellows:

Amani Reid, Jamir Hubbard

Photographer:

Ken McFarlane

Graphic Recording:

Haley McDevitt from Illustrating Progress

Reviewers/Editors:

Wendy Greenspan, Jana Korn, Julie Greenberg, Peggy Greenfeld, Charmaine Butler

Writer/Producer/Designer:

Nora Elmarzouky

Climate Justice and Jobs Director:

Rabbi Julie Greenberg

POWER Executive Director:

Bishop Dwayne Royster

Climate Justice and Jobs website:

<https://powerinterfaith.org/campaigns/climate-justice/>

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Thanks to the Unitarian Society of Germantown for hosting the People's Energy Summit in its beautiful oak grove.

INTERFAITH REFLECTIONS

"If I am not for myself, who am I?
If I am only for myself, what am I?
And if not now, when?"

-Rabbi Hillel

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوِّمِينَ لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلٰٓى ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا
أَعْدِلُوْا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

O YOU who have attained to faith! Be ever steadfast in your devotion to God, bearing witness to the truth in all equity; and never let hatred of anyone lead you into the sin of deviating from justice. Be just: this is closest to being God-conscious. And remain conscious of God: verily, God is aware of all that you do

Quran: Sura 6 - The Tablecloth (Al-Maidah)

“The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth dwindled, and few people are left”

Isaiah 24:4-6

IV.2.2. We call for an end to the degradation of the earth’s land, water, and atmosphere, the decline in biodiversity, the wasteful depletion of nonrenewable resources, and practices that lead to deforestation and desertification. The death to ocean life currently being wrought by acidification, proliferating plastic and microplastic waste must be addressed. We therefore urge the U.S. government to adopt laws, agreements, policies, and programs to protect and restore natural ecosystems, farmlands, and air and water resources. Both domestic and international partnerships will be necessary for success. Cooperation over shared natural resources is an effective instrument of peace.

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

WHO WE ARE

POWER is a faith-based
organizing force
in the state of Pennsylvania
for racial and economic justice
on a liveable planet.

POWER's Climate Justice and Jobs
team confronts the climate crisis through
an intersectional justice lens.
Our work grew out of heartbreak and
outrage: we're not going to stand for
politicians and bosses making money for
themselves, while burdening the rest of us
with an overheating planet, environmental
collapse and extreme weather such as floods,
hurricanes, storms, and earthquakes that
most hurt the least advantaged among us.
We face the disastrous juncture of extreme
inequality and climate crisis. At the same
time we are blessed to be in a moment of
dramatic potential for transformation.



A CLIMATE JUSTICE STORY

POWER leader, Dr. Linda Clark, speaks powerfully about her journey to find her Climate Justice story.

I was surprised when we started talking about stories from people who have privilege, because I thought - What's my story? I can't have a story. Then I started thinking, well yeah for years I have been doing individual things, lots of individual things to help the climate. Because I am a doctor and I have always read scientific articles in my work, I could read the scientific articles about climate change and I saw what was coming for a long time and I made lots of changes in my life.

I went without a car for ten years; my whole family went without a car. We turned the heat way down. We did lots of things [that would make] people think I was a little nuts. But I was doing everything I could. But then I found out that all of our individual efforts will only affect climate change a little bit and the other two thirds is institutions. I found that out a few years ago and I got really angry.

Especially when my older son, who is engaged, told me that he and his girlfriend had decided they are not going to have children. The one reason they are not having children is because of the climate [crisis]. And as a gardener I could see that our zone went from zone six to zone seven. My kids live in Denver and they are having forest fires all the time and I told them, look when I was young, we didn't have that kind of fire. We had fires, but they could be put out. We didn't have fires that would rage all throughout an entire neighborhood. We didn't have any of that kind of thing - but now things have changed. It's drier, it's hotter. It's obvious and yet institutions are just doing Business As Usual. They go for the short term. They are not looking forward.

That is why I am here.

“ ESPECIALLY WHEN MY OLDER SON, WHO IS ENGAGED, TOLD ME THAT HE AND HIS GIRLFRIEND HAD DECIDED THEY ARE NOT GOING TO HAVE CHILDREN.

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VISION & VALUES

AFFORDABILITY,
RENEWABILITY,
FAIR LABOR, AND
HEALTH AND SAFETY

Vision

The Climate Justice and Jobs team stands for People and the Planet rather than unchecked profit that damages human communities and our earth. We lead our part of the Just Transition (see an explanation of Just Transition on [page 12](#)) away from fossil fuels, pollution, and environmental racism toward a solidarity economy that works for all. We fight for healthy green jobs and renewable, affordable energy. Black, Brown, or White, rich or poor, all of us need a stable earth with clean air, water, and energy. That's why we're building a powerful movement for Climate Justice.

Values

Affordability, renewability, fair labor, and health and safety are foundational values of our work towards Energy Democracy (see explanation for Energy Democracy on [page 31](#)). These have to be addressed together and never used in opposition to each other. To enact this vision, we are committed to:

- **Respect and Listening:** Everyone is an expert on their own experience. We are all learners and all teachers.
- **Anti-Racism:** We are active in the urgent work of dismantling White Supremacy, extreme inequality and dehumanization.
- **Being Allies:** We're on the same team on a journey of co-liberation.
- **Unity and Diversity:** Our differences are welcome and generative.
- **Spirit and Action:** Personal and political (inner and outer) work is interconnected. We grow as leaders as we grow a movement.
- **Working from the Ground Up:** Real solutions have to be co-created by those most impacted by systems that marginalize and oppress

We need all of these values in an equitable Just Transition that works for all of our communities.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU BRING?

- •
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- •

This word cloud summarizes the values expressed by the Summit participants.



MORAL FRAMEWORK

At POWER we hold these moral lenses in building a climate-just Beloved Community:

- We hold the **intersection of race and economics** as integral to the climate conversation.
- We make **front and center** the voices of people most impacted by poverty, racism and climate crisis. **Black, Brown, poor and immigrant communities** and allies are building a multi-faith, multi-racial movement to transform the old energy economy into an inclusive, clean energy economy.
- We believe the **rights and dignity of workers** are essential to any transition from a fossil fuel economy to a renewable one.
- We stand for healthy lives for all: **pathways into Green Jobs; local and inclusive investment in green infrastructure**; and solutions that build economic opportunity, lift people out of poverty *and* challenge racism, as we work for a livable planet.
- We **build bridges between urban and rural communities** and between the U.S. and Global communities to create a racially and economically just movement that is both very local and very universal, putting community and care of the earth over exploitation and greed.

PROBLEM

Fossil fuel extraction and consumption are running rampant. A few at the top are making money while the rest of us struggle with a scarily changing environment. Hardest hit are Pennsylvania's low-income, immigrant and communities of color, which are situated alongside toxic fossil fuel infrastructure such as oil refineries, plastics plants and ash heaps. The cumulative impact of toxic health hazards, added to poverty, racism, and unemployment, further disadvantages people already targeted by multiple burdens. These burdens, one added to the next, result in lower life expectancies based on race and wealth: in privileged zip codes people live an average of twenty years longer than people in the most impacted places. These impacts are the consequences of environmental racism mixed with an unchecked, profit-driven economy.



**IF YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR HOME,
THE AIR YOU BREATHE,
SAFE JOBS,
THE SOIL THAT GROWS YOUR FOOD,
YOUR HEALTH AND THE WELL BEING
OF YOUR CHILDREN AND YOUR COMMUNITY,
YOU HAVE A CLIMATE JUSTICE STORY.**

YOUR CLIMATE JUSTICE STORY

This tool comes from the Storytelling Workshop on People's Energy Summit Day 2 with Jana Korn and Amani Reid

Everyone has a climate story. We all come to this space from different angles. Our understanding is deepened by each other's experiences and perspectives. We work together to build trust, understanding, and power. Our lived experiences are the foundation for the stories we tell to organize people and transform policy

Story of Oppression / Story of Opportunity

“You may think that your story doesn't matter, that people aren't interested, that you shouldn't be talking about yourself. But when you do public work, you have a responsibility to offer a public account of who you are, why you do what you do, and where you hope to lead. The thing about it is that if you don't author your public story, others will, and they may not tell it in the way that you like.”

“ WHEN YOU DO PUBLIC WORK, YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO OFFER A PUBLIC ACCOUNT OF WHO YOU ARE, WHY YOU DO WHAT YOU DO, AND WHERE YOU HOPE TO LEAD.

Why do stories matter?

Stories are one of the most powerful tools in a community organizer's toolkit. Our stories articulate our beliefs to create momentum around our values and translate who we are and what we stand for into action. If we don't tell our stories, other people will and they will likely get them wrong.

What is a public story?

A public story consists of three parts:



STORY OF SELF

“why you were called to what you have been called to.”

Everyone has a story about an experience that got them involved in a given cause. Communicates values. Presents a specific challenge faced, the choice made about how to deal with the challenge, and the outcome experienced.

STORY OF US

A collective story that illustrates the “shared purposes, goals, vision” of a community or organization. As with the story of self, the story of us focuses on a challenge, a choice, and an outcome of the group.

Need each other to win our fight.

STORY OF NOW

“The challenge this community now faces, the choices it must make, and the hope to which ‘we’ can aspire... urgent, it is rooted in the values celebrated in your story of self and us, and a contradiction to those values that requires action.” Invites people to join in taking hopeful action on the pressing challenge.

WHAT IS YOUR ENERGY JUSTICE STORY?

Think about something from your life that impacted your view of climate and the earth. It could be a personal experience or a person who influenced you deeply.

What was the injustice you saw?

What was the vision for a better world that was threatened by this injustice?

What choice did you face? What action were you called to?

What did you learn from this experience about justice? About the world? About yourself?

Storytelling Framework



Telling POWERful Stories

- Speak in your own voice and tell your truths. You are the expert in your story. **Tell it with authority.**
- Demonstrate **emotions** that will motivate others to join the movement. Emotions that motivate include pain, hope, outrage, and urgency.
- Include **humanizing details** that connect to the **hearts and minds** of those that you are trying to reach.
- Invites others to **act**.
 - What do you want your audience to do?
 - How can others join your movement?
 - What is the moral crisis?

Learn more about how to tell your story through the video recording of the workshop [video](#): Part 1 is a training and in Part 2 members share their stories.

POWER LOCAL GREEN JOBS

Our First Campaign

Here is the story of the POWER Climate Justice Team's very first campaign, which is now stronger than ever. This dramatic history is told by the Climate Justice and Jobs current co-chair Nancy Wygant.

One of the first campaigns that POWER's Climate Justice & Jobs team took on was the Power Local Green Jobs campaign, which had been initiated by the Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT) in 2015.

EQAT focuses on non-violent direct action campaigns against corporate targets. This is different from the community organizing work POWER does, where the focus is on making change through our government. It has been an exciting partnership - and POWER and EQAT continue to show up for each other and support each others' campaigns.

The Power Local Green Jobs campaign challenged PECO, southeastern PA's electric distributor, to support local solar energy. We asked PECO to make solar energy 20% of its portfolio by 2020 - a goal we knew they could achieve - and to commit to contracting with local solar facilities. This would create good jobs in local communities that have suffered from disinvestment. We built relationships with several local community organizations which had already begun solar installation job training programs.

We started off inviting PECO into dialogue. They were willing to talk - but they sent executives responsible for marketing and public relations, not the ones responsible for how they buy electricity to re-sell. We showed up repeatedly at their headquarters in Center City, talked with customers and drew media attention.



Power Local Jobs Continued...



Over the six years of the campaign, we danced the electric slide outside PECO's office (and invited them to dance with us). We brought them pies on Thanksgiving to illustrate the need for renewable energy as a bigger part of their purchasing pie. We walked a hundred-mile loop through PECO's five county service territory to build alliances between city and suburban communities. We preached to

customers in PECO's customer service center. We were arrested blocking their doors. We crashed their parent company's annual meeting to speak with the CEO and board members. We hung a 50 foot banner from their roof, asking "Climate is changing, why isn't PECO?" And later, when the Schuylkill flooded the Vine Street Expressway, we hung another banner from one of the bridges over the flood waters, outside PECO's headquarters.

This pressure caused PECO to take some significant steps. They created a department to deal with solar, began upgrading the grid to support solar, and made rooftop solar much more accessible for folks who could afford it. They contributed \$100,000 to a job

training program that included solar installation (although a drop in the bucket for a company that siphons over one million dollars a day in net profit from our region, for its parent company Exelon, based in Chicago). They eventually committed to procuring solar energy through local projects - but only for the minimum amount required by the state: one half of one percent of their total portfolio (which consists mostly of natural gas and nuclear power).

Despite all this, PECO continued to insist that because of state laws and regulations they were unable to meet our core demand - making solar energy 20% of their portfolio.

When we started this campaign, we knew the extraction and burning of fossil fuels was hurting our communities, and that the transition to renewable energy had to be linked with justice for communities which had suffered the most from disinvestment and pollution. We didn't know the intricacies of the energy system, and the web of corporations, public entities, and regulators. We learned a lot.

“CLIMATE IS CHANGING, WHY ISN'T PECO?”

Power Local Jobs Continued...

We learned that PECO, like other privately-owned utilities, is regulated by the state Public Utility Commission (PUC). We learned that every four years PECO is required to submit for PUC approval its plan with the technical details of how it will buy the energy it re-sells. So we pushed the PUC to hold a public hearing about that plan - which had never happened before. We won that hearing, and we turned out over 80 people (including many local elected officials) to testify about how PECO is refusing to respond to its customers' urgent need for sustainable energy and, how PECO is refusing to plan for the climate

crisis we are facing. The judge in charge of the hearing extended the time so that everyone who had signed up to testify could be heard - which meant that the hearing extended all day and into the evening. The judge ruled that the PUC, and therefore PECO, does have to take climate change into account. She further stated that since no alternative plan that does take the climate crisis into account had been submitted, the PUC had no choice but to accept PECO's business-as-usual plan.

“
WE LEARNED THAT PECO, LIKE OTHER PRIVATELY-OWNED UTILITIES, IS REGULATED BY THE STATE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION (PUC).”



Of course, the PUC did indeed have a choice. A few years before, the Hawaiian PUC firmly rejected the utility's plan, demanding that they produce a plan which actually met the needs of the people.

So after six years, we - POWER and EQAT together - decided that direct pressure on PECO was no longer the most strategic tactic.

EQAT has gone on to join an international campaign targeting Vanguard - an investment manager which controls over 8.5 TRILLION dollars, mostly belonging to individual investors saving for retirement. Vanguard is one of the top two investors in climate destruction globally, with investments throughout the fossil fuel industry. It also happens to be the largest shareholder in PECO's parent company Exelon. So EQAT and their allies are pushing Vanguard to take climate change seriously - and to use its leverage to push corporations like Exelon to change the way they do business.

Targeting the PUC

POWER leaders asked: Why couldn't we bring an alternative energy plan to the PUC? Clearly PECO has failed to create a viable energy future for a region that faces both climate crisis and extreme inequality. So POWER has taken the challenge the PUC handed us. We decided to create our own plan to take to the PUC. We are now working to create a grassroots People's Energy Plan, drawing on the experience of POWER's diverse membership, to create a vision for the electric

“ WE NEED A PUC THAT REPRESENTS US. ”

service we collectively need. We need energy to be affordable. We need it to be produced and distributed safely, in ways that don't poison our communities, that don't destroy the climate and the ecosystems we depend on. We need it to be healthy for our kids, and for future generations. We need a PUC that represents us, not just the energy industry; we need a PUC that will protect people and planet.

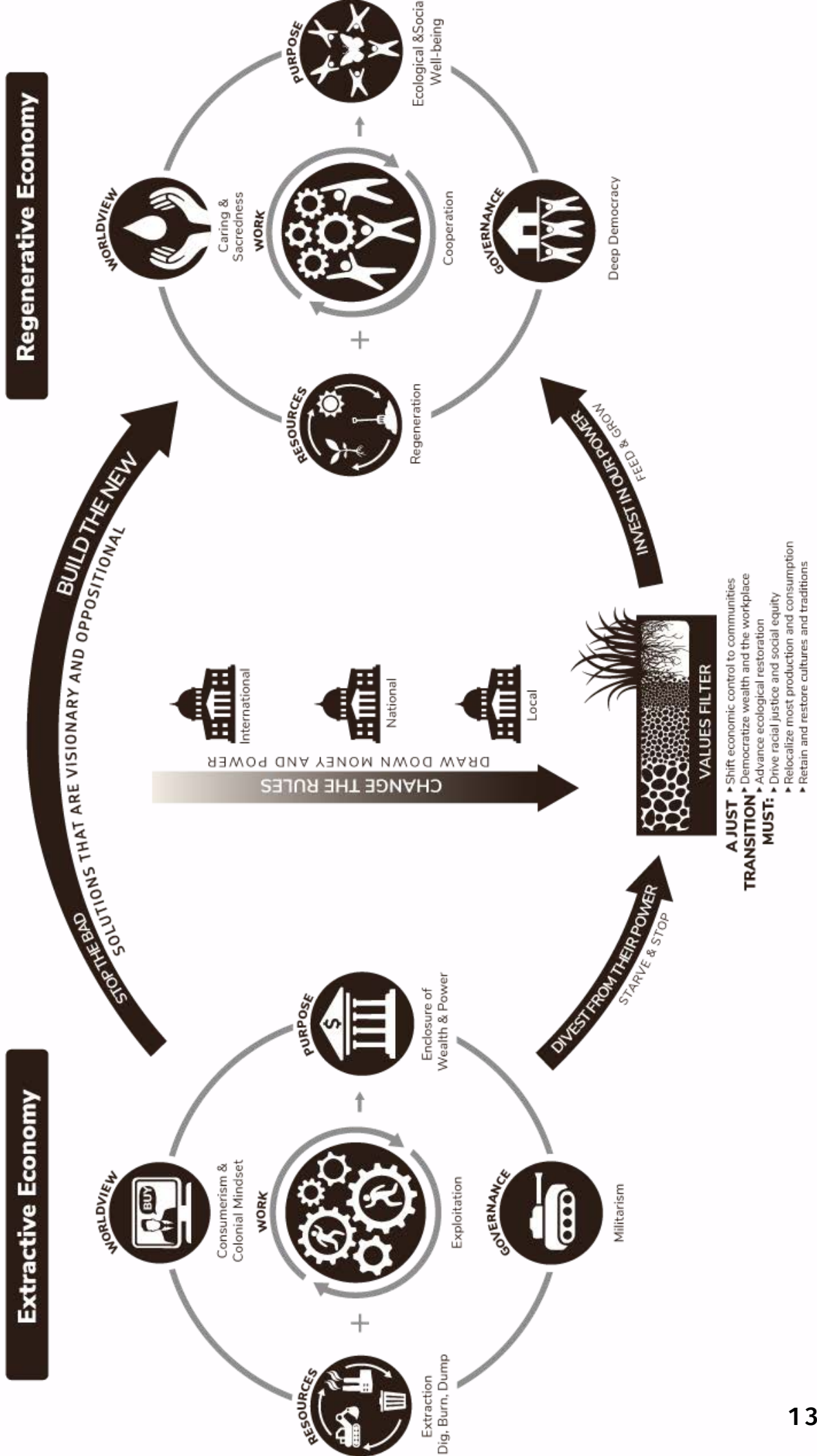
“ WE ARE NOW WORKING TO CREATE A GRASSROOTS PEOPLE'S ENERGY PLAN ”

Need for a Just Transition

POWER's Climate Justice and Jobs team is calling for a Just Transition away from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy. A Just Transition is about working with communities to create pathways to be part of the new clean energy economy. We need workforce development programs and community leadership that address both the climate crisis, and racial and economic inequality. We are exercising our human right to a liveable planet as ensconced in our state constitution.

IN PENNSYLVANIA, WE HAVE A RIGHT TO “CLEAN AIR, PURE WATER, AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATURAL, SCENIC, HISTORIC AND ESTHETIC VALUES OF THE ENVIRONMENT,” AS PROTECTED UNDER THE STATE CONSTITUTION (ARTICLE I, SECTION 27). SECTION 27 CLEARLY STATES: “AS TRUSTEE OF THESE RESOURCES, THE COMMONWEALTH SHALL CONSERVE AND MAINTAIN THEM FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL THE PEOPLE.”

Movement Generation Just Transition Framework



Have you heard of the Public Utility Commission?

THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION (PUC) REGULATES OUR UTILITIES IN PA.

THE PUC APPROVES

HOW MUCH WE PAY FOR OUR UTILITIES



Heating Our Homes



Turning On Our Lights



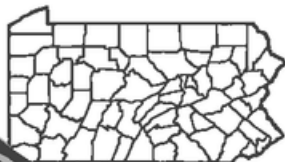
Cooking Our Food



Powering Our Electronics

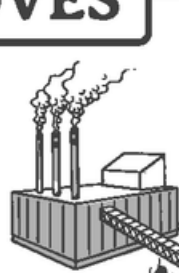
Electric and gas companies ask for rate hikes, while failing to require energy that's safe and affordable.

WHERE PIPELINES ARE LOCATED



Electric and gas companies ask for rate hikes, while failing to require energy that's safe and affordable.

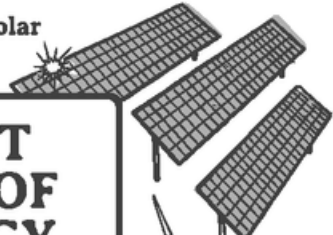
WHAT KIND OF ENERGY ELECTRIC COMPANIES USE



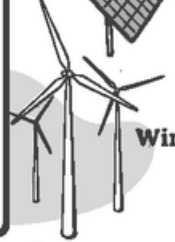
Coal

Gas

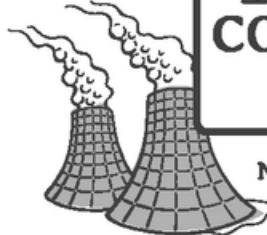
Solar



Wind



Nuclear



Water



Currently PECO only sources 0.5% solar. The majority of our energy comes from fossil fuels including natural gas.

THE UTILITY'S DISASTER PLANS

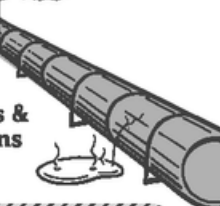


Power Outages



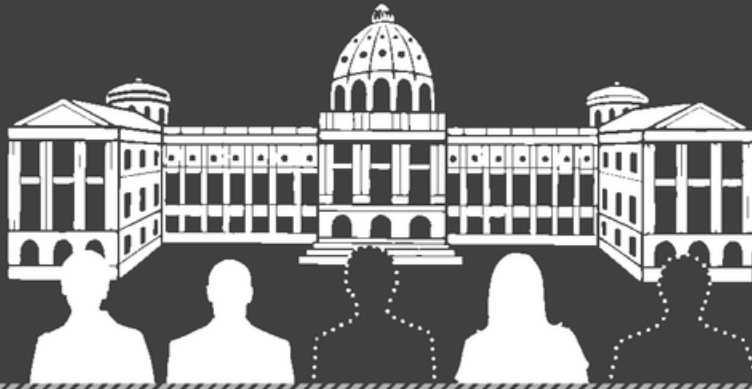
Damage from Storms

Gas Leaks & Explosions



Currently PECO only sources 0.5% solar. The majority of our energy comes from fossil fuels including natural gas.

What's wrong with the Public Utility Commission?



The PUC is supposed to have 5 commissioners but there are currently 2 vacant seats (soon to be 3).

PUC MISSION STATEMENT:
to protect the public interest in an environmentally sound manner



Then why are they approving the use of fossil fuels instead of green energy?

AND:
to balance the needs of consumers and utilities



Then why do they allow companies such as PECO to make over a million dollars a day in profits from customers?

CLIMATE CHANGE IS OUR BIGGEST THREAT

BURNING FOSSIL FUELS



Pollution releases carbon, contributing to climate change



Creates more frequent and destructive storms



Can lead to asthma, heart attacks, stroke and more

Despite all of this, Pennsylvania still sources its energy overwhelmingly from fossil fuels

HOLD THE PUC ACCOUNTABLE TO ITS MISSION TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC

The PUC needs to hear from the public, not just utilities. Make your voice heard.

POWER is an organizing force for racial and economic justice on a livable planet.

Get involved with POWER today:
powerpuc.org

Strategies for a Just Transition

Through our various campaigns, POWER's Climate Justice and Jobs team has organized member leaders in a variety of ways to propel a Just Transition forward. Our organizing has included, but not been limited to:

ORGANIZING CONGREGATIONS

Conducting one-to-one conversations with congregational community members and faith leaders to listen and learn about their self-interest and invite them into the Climate Justice movement.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC HEARINGS

Showing up where decisions are made to tell our stories to influence policy, regulation, and other energy and climate decision-making

BUILDING STRENGTH WITH ALLIES

Participating in multiple local and state coalitions that bring together many groups who are approaching Climate Justice from a variety of experiences and perspectives. We are the Equity Flank in environmental conversations and the Environmental Flank in racial justice conversations

ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT

Phone banking, texting, and canvassing to elect climate champions into decision-making positions. Energy and Climate Justice is a voting issue and a matter of life and death.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Using digital media like infographics and animations, letters to the editor, op-eds, and presentations to promote a Climate Justice narrative, countering disinformation campaigns across the state.

DIRECT ACTION

Organizing actions in the streets and in the corridors of power to amplify the urgency of Climate Justice action.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

Working with elected officials to co-create policies based on the needs of the people, such as, most recently, the Whole Home Repairs Bill where we won \$125 million for low-income folks to repair and weatherize homes while creating a workforce development program for a green economy.

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

Working with legal groups, such as EarthJustice, the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project, and Community Legal Services to develop understanding of the legal ramifications and steps we need to take to influence decision-makers. 16

THE PEOPLE'S ENERGY SUMMIT

The first-ever POWER People's Energy Summit was a peak moment in our three-year Power Local Green Jobs strategy. We escalated our campaign to compel PECO to create a viable energy future for our area. The Summit gathered people from 25 POWER congregations across southeastern PA to deepen a shared analysis about how



energy systems perpetuate climate, racial, and economic injustices and to build power to fight for a world that puts people and planet over profit. Organizing the Summit was a labor of love that was led by POWER's Public Utility Commission (PUC) Working Group - which has been doing powerful research and strategizing since January 2021. This research grew out of our Power Local Green Jobs campaign. How can ratepayers insist that PECO do the right thing for our communities and our earth? PECO was largely unresponsive, so we escalated our campaign to the Public Utility Commission, which regulates PECO.

POWER leaders dove deep into researching energy issues as they relate to the PUC. We studied their roles and responsibilities, the power they have, their relationships to the legislature and the fossil fuel industry and their relationship with utilities as a whole. The group learned about points for public leverage. We asked ourselves where we could make a difference.

For the first stage of our three-year current strategic plan, in Fall 2021, we embarked on a campaign to fill the two vacant commissioner seats (out of five seats total) with Climate Justice champions. We worked with allies to recruit people to apply and be evaluated according to our expectations and submitted two names to the Governor. We sat with Governor Wolf who promised to work with us in nominating two candidates who would protect people and the planet. Unfortunately, the Governor,

People's Energy Summit Continued...

who was struggling with getting any climate friendly initiatives to move forward in a state that is in the grip of the fossil fuel industry, did not move our nominees forward. Meanwhile, the State Senate also failed to lead. Dominated by the dirty energy sector, they chose to hold the PUC vacancies hostage, blocking any progress toward Climate Justice. Would we let the Philadelphia 76ers start without two of their players on the court?

Additionally, POWER recommended one of our team members to serve on the Public Utility Commission's Consumer Advisory Council. We are continuing to look for opportunities to have public influence at the PUC.

Our PUC Working Group has been working on an on-going awareness campaign. Check out one of our productions co-created with POWER's Digital Media Specialist, Salina Singleton [here](#).

Our research laid the groundwork for planning the People's Energy Summit. We wanted to share widely throughout the state what is hurting and

how we can shape our energy future together. The Summit was designed and facilitated by the planning committee led by our **PUC Working Group conveners: Charmaine Butler, Wendy Greenspan; by leaders: Nancy Wygant, Linda Clark, Pamela Darville, Bill Cozzens, Peggy Greenfeld, David Clowney; and POWER staff: Nora Elmarzouky, Jana Korn, Amani Reid, Julie Greenberg.** The day was



Mced by Jamir Hubbard who also joined Amani Reid in serenading the gathering with their saxophones. The Summit was possible because of enthusiastic engagement, both virtually and in-person, even under pandemic and extreme heat conditions. Special thanks to our local caterer [Herb Scott Catering](#). A big thank you to all who participated!



Agenda + Goals of The People's Energy Summit

BEFORE: ART BUILD

A fun way to bring people of all ages together into creative community. We made art together to carry our Climate Justice messages.



DAY 1: INFORMAL COMMUNITY BUILDING DINNER

Get to know each other over food and good company.



DAY 2: OPENING FAITH REFLECTION & ICEBREAKERS

Bishop Royster grounds us in our values as an interfaith organization and way to build community through sharing what brings each of us to the work, what tugs at our hearts, and how we remain resilient.

D2 - SESSION 1: ELECTRIC GRID ROLE PLAYING

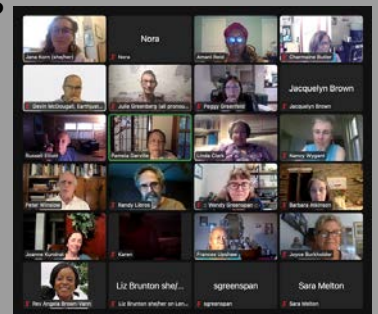
A skit to get to know the systems we are trying to change, asking questions like “Who are the main players?” and “What is the infrastructure?” Nora Elmarzouky, Nancy Wygant, Bill Cozzens



DAY 3: SESSION 4: DIVING DEEP INTO THE PUC

A presentation with our legal partners to understand what the legal role of the PUC is in regulating utilities and how the public can engage to make a difference?

Devin McDougall, Earth Justice



D3 - SESSION 5: OUR ENERGY STORIES

A workshop about why our stories are important and how to craft them for ourselves, to support our organizing, and to impact public policy. Jana Korn, Amani Reid



D2 - SESSION 2: ENERGY DEMOCRACY

Using the Energy Democracy Scorecard to build a shared analysis and language by assessing where our communities lie on the energy spectrum from extractive to regenerative economy. Nora Elmarzouky, Pamela Darville, David Clowney

D2 - SESSION 3: TRANSFORMING OUR SYSTEMS

Using art and words to reimagine the world we want to build together towards energy democracy, asking questions like “What world do we want to live in?” and “How will we build thriving communities?” Jana Korn, Charmaine Butler

ICEBREAKER: DYADS

In dyads at your table for two minutes each share:
What are you grateful for today?

In the same dyad for two minutes each share:
What is breaking your heart these days?

In a new dyad from your own table for two minutes each:
*What is a gift that has come down through the generations
from your ancestors that strengthens you today?*

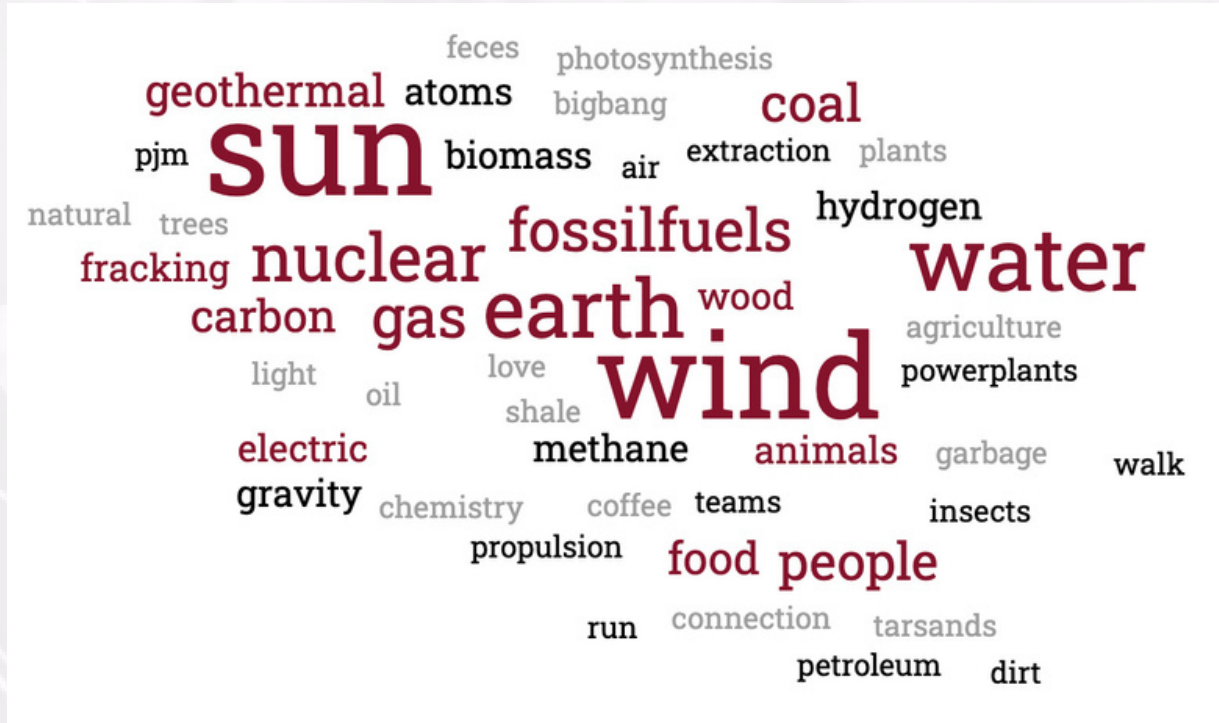
*Over the course of the day, make sure everyone at your
table introduces themselves – name, pronouns,
congregation & where they live, and shares the gift from
their ancestors. These gifts become our superpowers!*



ELECTRIC GRID

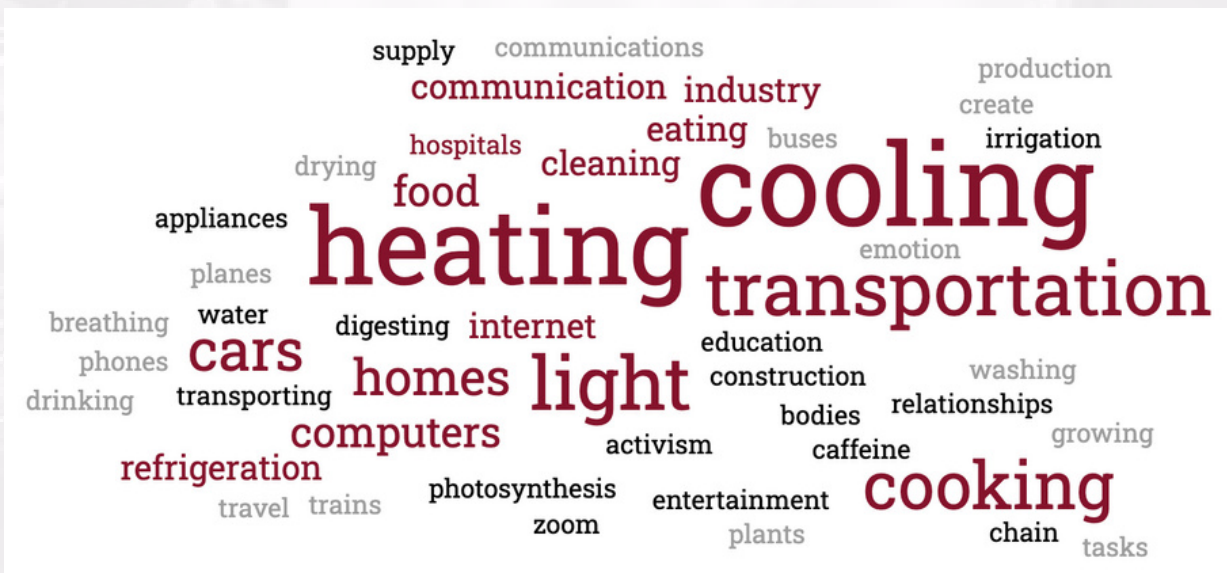
So, where do we get our energy from, especially when we think expansively of what energy means?

Summit Participants said:



What do we use energy for?

Summit participants said:

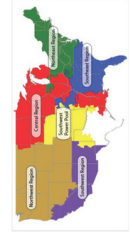


Electric Grid Infrastructure

Let us understand the components of the electric grid and the players that make it function.



Federal Regulator



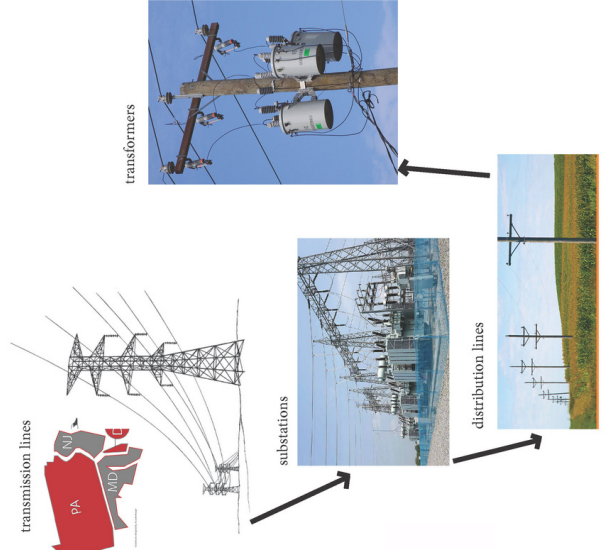
Operator



**CITIZEN/
CONSUMER/
CUSTOMER
RATE PAYER**



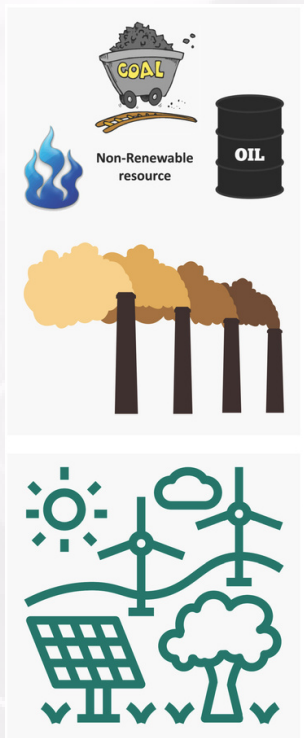
Energy Distribution



Energy Generation



Energy Generation



WHERE WE GET OUR ENERGY FROM

Is there a power plant located in your community?

If so, how far from you?

What are the impacts on your community being located so close to a power plant or natural gas pipeline?

■ This is where energy is produced/created. In PA energy generation is controlled by a different company than electric distribution. There are many energy generators, including renewable energy sources, because in PA customers have a “choice” of where they can get their energy from. **We do not think there are individual solutions to systemic problems.** Therefore we need PECO to make sure that the Default Service Plan, which serves the vast majority of PECO customers, obtains its energy from clean, safe sources such as solar. We want a solution that works for all rather than private options for more privileged people.

■ Disproportionate numbers of power plants are located in Black, Brown, Indigenous, and working class neighborhoods, which creates an increase of environmental hazards, such as adverse health impacts. **This is known as environmental racism.**

■ The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) defines an Environmental Justice Area as any census tract where 20 percent or more individuals live at or below the federal poverty line, and/or 30 percent or more of the population identifies as a non-white minority, based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the federal guidelines for poverty.

■ Energy generators are owned by various privately-owned companies that bid for the ability to supply energy onto the grid. Generators are responsible for managing and operating the plant so it is available to generate electricity when required by its contracts. **As a privately-owned company, they hire lobbyists to write policies and pressure the Public Utility Commission to ensure their profits.**

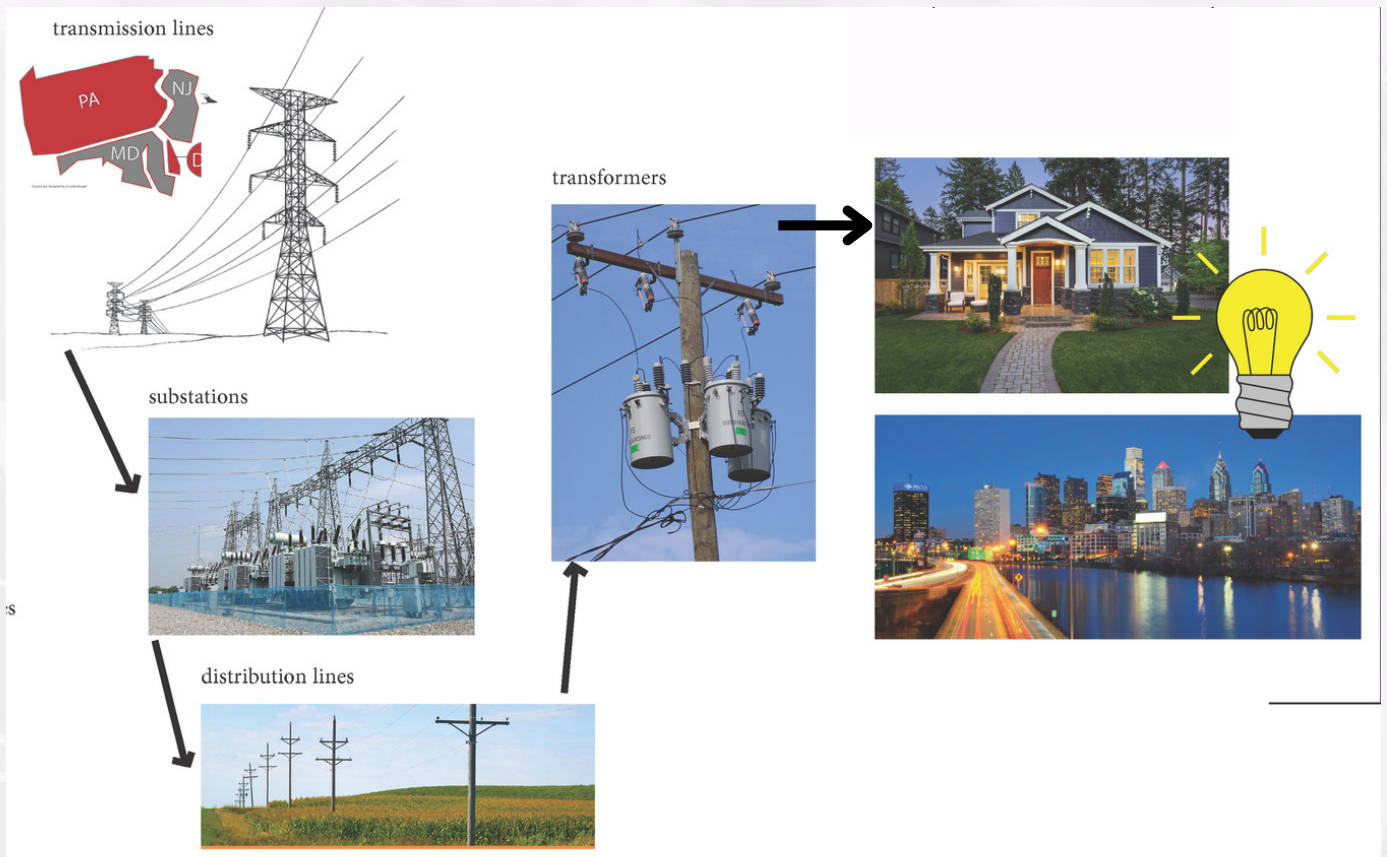
■ Renewable energy such as solar and wind are getting cheaper and cheaper and proving to offer good paying jobs. **The transition to renewable energy has proven to also increase GDP in many states across the country.** Renewable energy leaders are also working with lobbyists to pass legislation that would support an increase in renewable energy to the grid.

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR OUR PUBLIC LEADERS TO REPRESENT OUR NEEDS & DREAMS?

Electric Distribution

HOW OUR ELECTRIC GETS TO US

*Where do you see the infrastructure of electric distribution?
Where are these located?*



TRANSMISSION LINES

are those big huge electric lines that run across communities. They move high voltage electricity produced in the generators to distribution utilities. Local landowners and communities who oppose new transmission lines make planning, obtaining approval, and building new transmission lines very time consuming and expensive.

SUBSTATIONS

convert high voltage electricity from the transmission lines to lower voltage that is safe for local delivery.

DISTRIBUTION LINES

can be seen on streets running through cities and small towns, perhaps through your backyard. This is how energy moves through the system.

TRANSFORMERS

make sure the voltage of the electricity is low enough to enter into homes.

Default Service Plan (DSP)

WHY WE NEED A PEOPLE'S ENERGY PLAN

Our electric bills are divided into two parts - **SUPPLY** and **DISTRIBUTION**. In 1995, PA passed a law separating electricity generation/supply and distribution - this is known as deregulation. One company can't do both. The justification is that it gives customers a choice and creates competition to keep supply rates low. PECO holds a monopoly for electricity distribution.

The Default Service Plan (DSP) determines the source of electricity supply for PECO (or other investor-owned electric distribution companies). A DSP determines which power plants PECO contracts with to buy electricity for default service customers (for example, gas plants, solar plants, wind farms). A **default service customer** is someone who does **NOT** choose their electric generation supplier (eg. Green Mountain Energy). Nearly 70% of PECO customers rely upon the DSP. This can be for a number of reasons including - not knowing that there is an option to choose, an overwhelming and confusing array of choices, or a fear of predatory practices. Also, low-income customers who receive support are not allowed to choose an alternate your energy supplier.

While there are various components of the DSP, we are focusing on the DSP procurement plan. The DSP shapes affordability for default service customers by considering the costs of supply. Through the DSP, PECO can choose to procure energy from clean energy sources such as solar and wind.

Because PECO's DSP shapes the amount of affordable clean energy supplied to the majority of PECO's customers, achieving a cleaner and more equitable DSP is a key part of the structural change needed to make the People's Energy Plan a reality.

PECO must submit its DSP to the PUC for review and approval. The PUC reviews the proposed DSP to assess whether it contains a "prudent mix" of contracts that ensures "adequate and reliable service" at the "least cost over time." To assess these issues, the PUC hears both from expert testimony and from the public. The PUC is tasked with regulating in the public interest, but has for almost a hundred years heard nearly exclusively from industry voices. PECO's most recent DSP case, in the summer of 2020, was the first time a public hearing was ever held about its DSP. PECO attempted to block members of the public from testifying about climate change, but was overruled by the judge after a legal battle.

Showing up at PECO's next DSP case before the PUC is critical to ensuring Climate Justice and clean energy concerns get a fair hearing!

Players of the Electric Grid

WHO CONTROLS THE ELECTRIC GRID & THEIR ROLES

Who is missing?

This is particular to Southeastern PA - Who are your local players?

Where are the levers of power?

CONSUMERS // PEOPLE



Recipients of utilities' services. We must demand that the players listen to the voices of the people and implement a system that works for people and the planet!

PECO



Electric distribution company in Southeastern PA. It is an investor-owned utility whose bottom line is to ensure there is a profit for their shareholders. They have to comply with the regulations set forth by the Public Utility Commission on such things as rates that are sufficient to cover the costs of infrastructure and capital projects.

EXELON



Parent company of PECO based in Chicago which owns local utilities across several states. PECO sends over \$1,000,000 each day from you and your neighbors to shareholders of Exelon. There are many energy generators like Exelon.

FOSSIL FUEL LOBBY

Works to write and promote policies that maintain the power and profit of the fossil fuel industry.

RENEWABLE ENERGY LOBBY

Works to ensure renewable energy policy that supports healthy communities. Sometimes they also advocate for racial and economic justice alongside the need for renewable energy.

PA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION (PUC)



“The mission... is to balance the needs of consumers and utilities; ensure safe and reliable utility service at reasonable rates; protect the public interest; educate consumers to make independent and informed utility choices; further economic development; and foster new technologies and competitive markets in an environmentally sound manner.” They approve a utility’s default service plan (DSP), the plan for how it buys the energy it will sell, placement of pipelines, rate hikes, utility shut-offs, etc.

Players of the Grid Continued...

PA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State agency that proposes and implements the Governor's and the legislature's policies for protecting the environment.

PA STATE LEGISLATURE

Creates legislation that in PA has always favored the fossil fuel industry. The Senate approves the PUC commissioners.

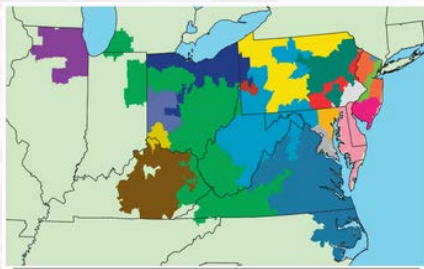
GOVERNOR & EXECUTIVE BRANCH



Who will be the next Governor?

The governor can take executive actions to expand climate protections and can veto anti-climate legislation. A governor can also revoke measures protecting people and the planet to benefit the fossil fuel industry. Gov. Wolf issued executive orders to address the climate crisis and vetoed legislation would prevent municipalities from promoting a Just Transition. The State Executive Branch makes sure PA's laws are carried out as intended. Key officials are the Governor, the Lt. Governor, and the Attorney General. Important members of the Governor's Cabinet include the Secretary of Environmental Protection and the Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources.

PJM



Operates the energy market. It covers all or parts of 13 states and the District of Columbia. It is a private-public partnership with a Board of Directors made up of power generators, transmission owners, and distribution utilities. PJM gets bids from generators to sell power to the grid. It tells generators when to turn on and off based on system demands. It always chooses the lowest bid first. So generators offer the cheapest energy sources that are hardest to turn on and off. That means nuclear and coal. Learn more about PJM [here](#).

FERC



Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. FERC Commissioners are appointed by the President, so they change depending on the political party in office. They are beholden to national legislation and the policy direction of the Administration and US Congress. FERC regulates and oversees PJM and other grid operators around the country and sets the rules that PJM operates by.

Players of the Grid Continued...

US CONGRESS



can pass federal legislation to take action to combat the climate crisis, but so far has chosen not to. Elected officials will listen to whoever they hear and receive political financial support from and to whoever makes their jobs easier by doing things like writing legislation.

US EXECUTIVE BRANCH



Can pass executive orders to act on the climate crisis. It can pressure US Congress, generate or support bills and name budgetary priorities to address the climate crisis, particularly through investing in a Just Transition.

US ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



Protects people and the environment from significant health risks, sponsors and conducts research, and develops and enforces environmental regulations.

PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL



Has the power to dictate the energy that the city buys. City Council can take powerful action on the climate crisis locally such as leading an energy transition away from dirty fossil fuel in the municipally-owned gas utility Philadelphia Gas Works. However, there is little that they can do about electricity.

PHILADELPHIA ENERGY AUTHORITY



Public-private independent municipal agency that was created in 2010 to promote energy affordability and sustainability. They design programs to help homeowners get rooftop solar through group buy programs and run a whole home repair program.

LABOR GROUPS

Essential part of a Just Transition towards clean energy. There are many different labor groups. The transition must include good union jobs.

Want to learn more about the Electric Grid in a fun way? You can check out the [Electric Grid Role-playing skit](#) co-created by Nancy Wygant, Bill Cozzens, and Nora Elmarzouky.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT AS YOU UNDERSTAND THE GRID

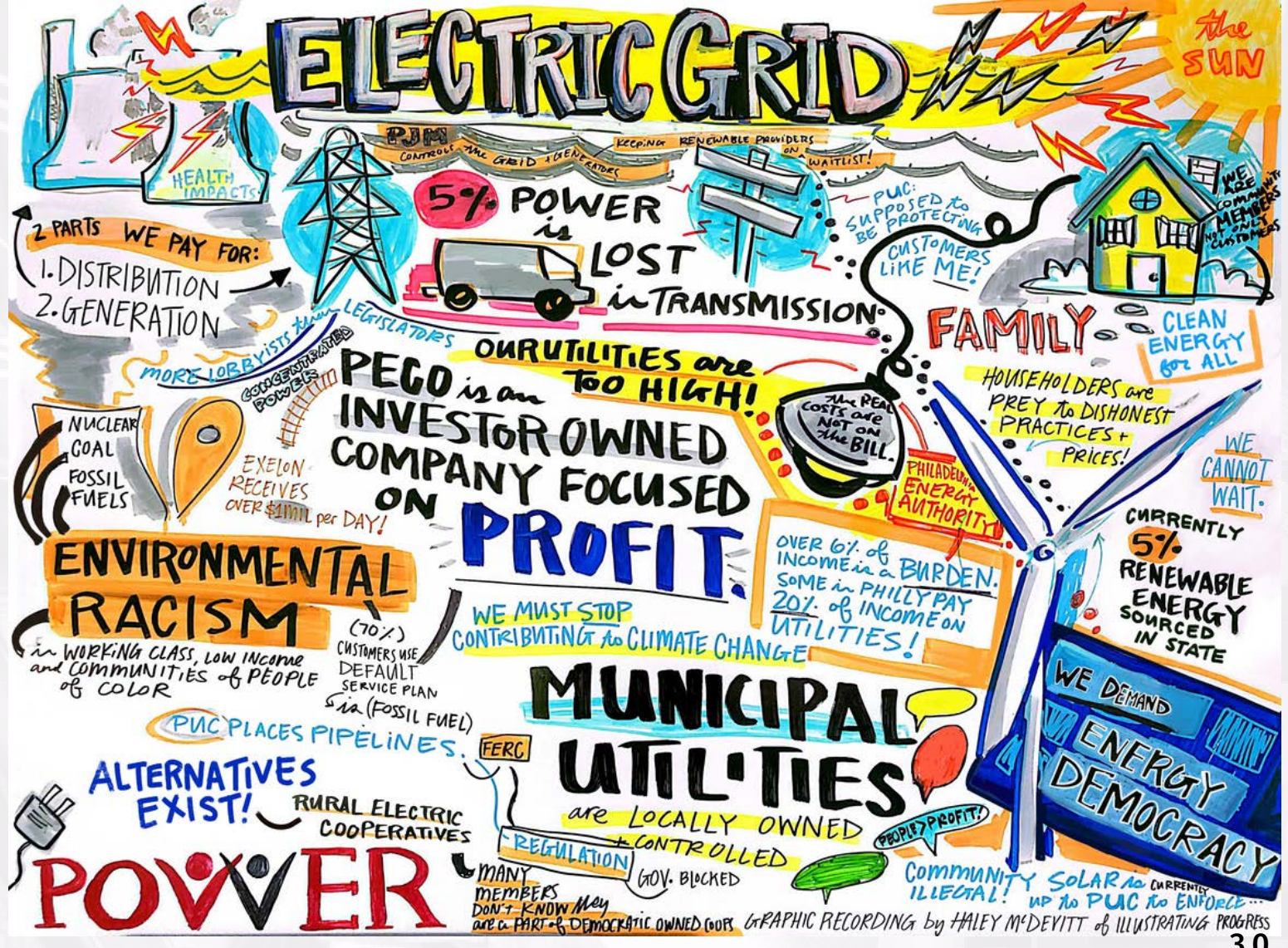
What questions do you have about where your energy comes from?

What questions do you have about how much your energy costs and how much the workers get paid for producing it?

Who can you join to find out more?

Where else can you go to learn more?

What can you do together to share your needs, questions and ideas with decision makers?



ENERGY DEMOCRACY



What is energy? We just learned a little bit about the complicated nature of our electric grid, the various players, the underlying corporate profit making interests and the government players who protect them. Energy is so much more than just the lights in our house. It is the way we get our food and where it comes from. The water systems and biodiversity. It is the effort put into work, organizing, and care. It is how we get our clothes, bikes, and any other goods and services we use. **Energy Is Everything. Energy is a human right. It should not be commodified so that corporations are able to make millions of dollars in profits from our pockets.** For millions of families across the country, there is no choice but to keep their lights on and warm their homes with fossil fuel-based energy. The industry causes irreparable damage to our environment, fuels our climate crisis, and harms our communities, especially Black, brown, Indigenous, and low-income populations. Yet, it is still extremely hard to break up with this dirty energy for our homes, schools, and community centers.

Energy Democracy is about transforming these extractive practices into a system of regeneration. We know that energy is largely sourced from fossil fuels, a major contributor to greenhouse gases and other forms of pollution and contamination in communities. Dirty energy is toxic to residents, workers and our earth. Energy Democracy recognizes that BIPOC and working class communities have been disproportionately burdened by the ills of the fossil fuel industry which lowers property values, causes adverse health impacts such as asthma, respiratory illnesses, heart disease and other health problems.



Energy Democracy centers racial and economic justice through an intersectional approach to the climate crisis and current energy systems. Energy democracy provides a framework to transform the extractive, harmful, centralized energy system into a decentralized, just, and regenerative system.

ENERGY DEMOCRACY

Energy democracy calls for community-owned energy sources that are for the people and by the people, decentralizing and transforming the energy system to benefit consumers, rather than pollute and deplete their pockets. You can watch this short 2-minute video to learn more: <https://bit.ly/3L9rTBo>

Problem:

CENTRALIZED, DIRTY, FOR-PROFIT ENERGY

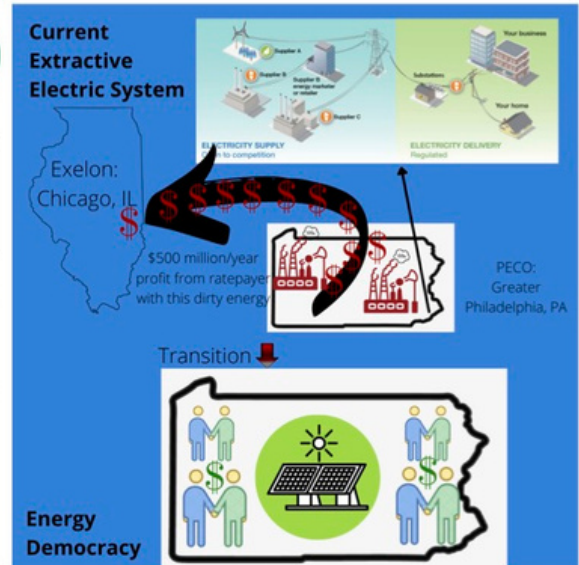
The current state of the energy grid is harmful to the environment and disproportionately impacts Black, Brown, Indigenous, and low-income communities causing adverse health effects and so much more. In Philadelphia, PECO is an investor-owned electric utility company that is solely responsible for the distribution of electricity and primarily transports dirty energy

How much profit?

\$500,000,000/YEAR

Did you know that PECO makes over \$1 million a day profit for the shareholders of their parent company Exelon? This comes from the customer, which then exports \$500 million+ out of state.

TO TRANSFORM THE SYSTEM, WE MUST TELL THE STORY OF HOW ENERGY DEMOCRACY CAN TRANSFORM LIVES AND ADDRESS THE SOCIETAL ILLS OF SYSTEMIC RACISM, CAPITALISM, HETEROPATRIARCHY, IMPERIALISM/COLONIALISM, AND WHITE SUPREMACY.



WHAT YOU CAN DO?

Organize your community!

- Learn more about and assess your community and its relationship to energy.
- Find applicable lessons from other energy fights
- 1:1 with people in your network
- Call/write legislators and get your community members to also!
- Lobby visits
- Letter-to-the-editor and opinion
- Public talks - Educate Public
- Encourage citizens to vote for good government!
- Encourage citizens to RUN for office

CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT A DIFFERENCE ENERGY DEMOCRACY WOULD MAKE FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITIES?



LET'S TAKE BACK OUR POWER.

IT IS A HUMAN RIGHT AND BASIC NEED FOR ALL.

LEARN MORE

A friendly reminder: We've done our research, but you should, too! Check our sources against your own, and always exercise sound judgment.

- Energy Democracy Project: <https://energydemocracy.us/>
- Emerald Cities Collaborative: <https://emeraldcities.org/>
- Little Sis Powerlines 101: <https://powerlines101.org/>
- A People's Orientation to a Regenerative Economy: <https://climatejusticealliance.org/regenerativeeconomy/>
- Climate Justice Alliance: <https://climatejusticealliance.org/>
- Book- Energy Democracy Project: Advancing Equity in Clean Energy Solutions: Buy Book

ENERGY DEMOCRACY REVOLVES AROUND 4 PILLARS THAT ARE ALWAYS ADDRESSED TOGETHER AND NEVER SEPARATELY.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

is how we treat people

Addresses issues of racism, inequity, inequitable access, health, and land rights

REGENERATIVE ENERGY

is how we treat the environment and community health

Addresses the type of energy we use, pollution, and energy policy goals

MORAL ECONOMY

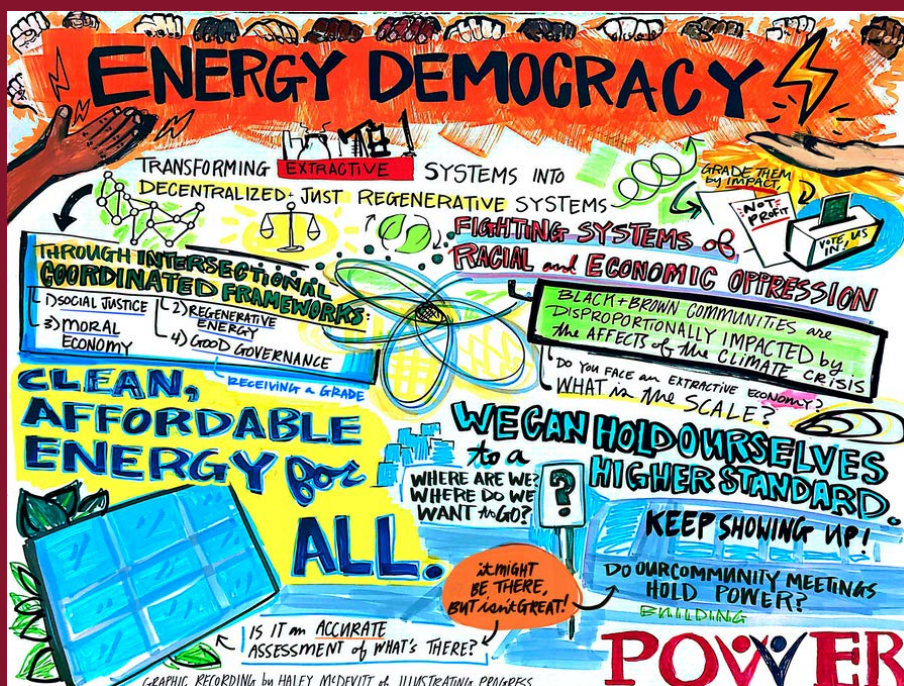
is how we treat workers

Addresses fair labor and wages, economic ownership, workforce development and training, finance, and adequate training and transitional assistance for those formerly employed by exploitative institutions (e.g., coal)

GOOD GOVERNANCE

is how we make decisions

Addresses how decisions are made, who controls the energy and political process, and where ownership ultimately lies



GROUNDING IN 4 CORE PILLARS

Respond Yes, No, or I don't know to the "I" statements below.
There is no right or wrong answer.

I have access to clean and renewable energy.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

My energy is affordable.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

The people who make sure we have energy have safe working conditions and are fairly paid.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

I know how decisions around energy are made and I have an opportunity to be involved in the decision making process.

YES NO I DON'T KNOW

NOTES, FEELINGS, REFLECTIONS, NEXT STEPS

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT ENERGY DEMOCRACY

What has been your experience with energy access and pollution?



Who makes decisions about our energy source, access, & utility bills?



Who controls our energy?



Who benefits from energy?



How could our communities shape our energy future and reap the rewards of the energy system?



Energy Democracy Scorecard

Emerald Cities Collaborative in collaboration with grassroots and BIPOC led organizations across the country, created the Energy Democracy Scorecard to assess where our communities are on the Energy Economy Spectrum. The scorecard was designed by Pueblo Planning. The Energy Democracy Scorecard can be used to build shared analyses around energy to build community power, as an accountability tool for corporations and government commitments toward Energy Democracy, and shift resources to frontline leadership. The Energy Economy Spectrum is a framework to see where our communities are according to the responses to surveys on each of the four pillars. The Energy Economy Spectrum helps chart a pathway towards energy democracy.

EXTRACTIVE

Harms the community and environment - In this type of energy economy the dignity of labor, people's health, and the planet's wellbeing are exploited solely for profit in violent and polluting ways.

BETTER, BUT NOT GREAT

This type of energy economy signifies a shift away from fossil-fuel extraction and maybe even creates some community processes and green job solutions, but without regard for racial equity or environmental justice (for example, all the solar panels in the city could be on the homes of wealthy white families).

ENERGY DEMOCRACY

Thriving community and healthy environment - This type of energy economy represents a complete shift away from an extractive economy, energy, and governance system to one that is regenerative, provides reparations, transforms power structures, and creates new governance and ownership practices.

Samples from Energy Democracy Scorecard

SOCIAL JUSTICE

	Extractive (0-1)		Better, but NOT Good or Great (2-5)				Energy Democracy (6-7)		Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<p>Environmental Racism:</p> <p>Health Impacts</p>	<p>There is an undue burden on people's lives due to active energy extraction (uranium mining and cancer, fracking and impact on water, pollution and asthma).</p> <p>For example, are asthma rates or cancer prevalence 2 or more times higher than the state and/or national average and catastrophically higher in Black, Brown and Indigenous communities</p>		<p>There remains an undue burden on people's lives due to legacy and some active energy extraction (uranium mining and cancer, fracking and impact on water, pollution and asthma)</p> <p>For example, are asthma rates or cancer prevalence slightly higher than the state and/or national average and catastrophically higher in Black, Brown and Indigenous communities</p>		<p>There remains an undue burden on people's lives due to legacy energy extraction (uranium mining and cancer, fracking and impact on water, pollution and asthma) but there are no more active extractive practices.</p> <p>For example, are asthma rates or cancer prevalence at or near the state and/or national average and but still higher in Black, Brown and Indigenous communities</p>		<p>There is no longer any undue burden on people's lives due to legacy energy extraction as this has been remediated and restored.</p> <p>For example, are asthma rates or cancer prevalence below the state and/or national average and there is no racial disparity.</p>		
<p>Environmental Racism:</p> <p>Siting of Energy Plants</p>	<p>Power Plants exist and are expanded. Combustion exists in low-income communities of color, while natural gas plants are being built in low-income and communities of color. Waste incineration plants remain, and diesel particulate matter is high</p>		<p>No fossil-fuel or waste incineration plants in communities of color, but there remain high concentrations of diesel particulate matter</p>		<p>There are no fossil fuel plants, waste incinerators, or abnormal concentration of diesel particulate matter</p>		<p>Communities of color have self-determination in where renewable energy projects are deployed and situated.</p>		

REGENERATIVE ENERGY SYSTEMS

Category	Extractive (0-1)		Better, but NOT Good or Great (2-5)				Energy Democracy (6-7)		Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<p>Culturally Appropriate Energy Systems</p>	<p>There is an operating assumption by everyone that energy is needed to be taken and harnessed from the earth and/or solar system as a human-centric right, without a deeper understanding of its intersections to the broader ecosystem</p>		<p>There is an operating assumption mostly by elected officials and businesses that energy is needed to be taken and harnessed from the earth and/or solar system as a human-centric right, without a deeper understanding of its intersections to the broader ecosystem</p>		<p>There is openness from community members (but not elected officials) to understand energy through a non-western and non-humanspecific perspective. Access to energy could still be seen as a right, but within a more holistic understanding and relationship to the earth</p>		<p>There is openness from everyone to understand energy through a non-western and nonhuman-specific perspective. Access to energy could still be seen as a right, but within a more holistic understanding and relationship to the earth</p>		
<p>Renewable Energy Goals</p>	<p>A commitment to "80% carbon emissions by 2050" (80x50), but not explicit renewable energy goals exist, nor any carve out for local generation</p>		<p>80x50 commitment and renewable energy procurement or generation goals are less than 50% by 2035, no carve out for local generation</p>		<p>Goals go beyond 80 x 50 to 100% renewables by 2050, with less than 10% carve-out for local renewables</p>		<p>Goals go beyond 80 x 50 to 100% renewables by 2040, with at least 50% carve-out for local renewables with explicit commitment to invest in of Black, Brown, Indigenous and EJ communities</p>		

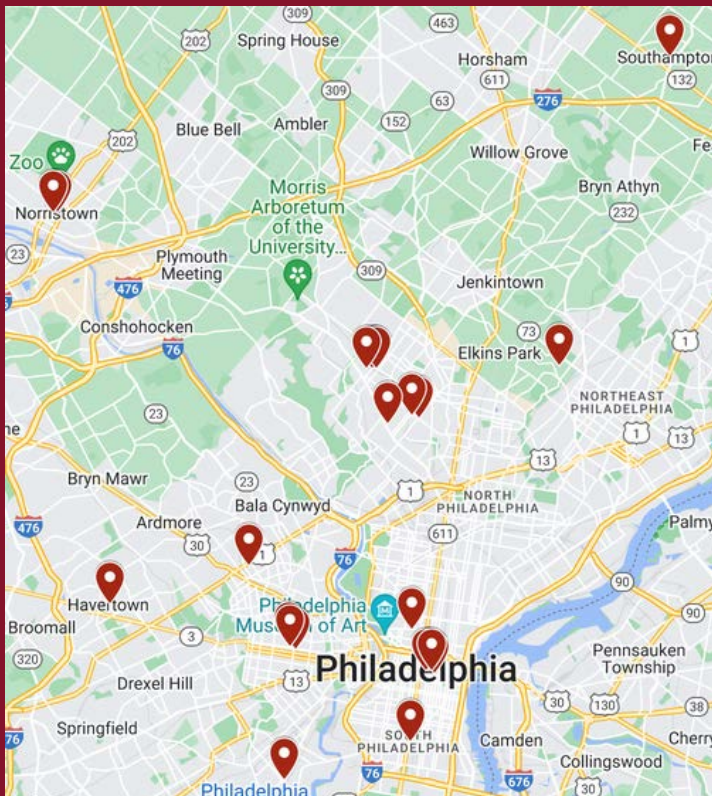
MORAL ECONOMY

	Extractive (0-1)		Better, but NOT Good or Great (2-5)				Energy Democracy (6-7)		Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<p>Wages</p>	<p>Federal minimum wage green jobs, right-to-work legislation, no ordinances or laws guaranteeing prevailing wage</p>		<p>Higher than federal minimum wage green jobs guaranteed by ordinance, but not prevailing wage</p>		<p>Prevailing wage and high-road labor standards</p>		<p>Prevailing wage and high-road labor standards, with emphasis on inclusionary hiring practices that prioritize low-income/wealth and Black and Brown communities</p>		
<p>Workforce Training</p>	<p>No workforce training programs in green jobs or apprentice programs with on-road to actual jobs</p>		<p>Workforce training program for green jobs, but no job guarantees; no priorities for low-income, Black and Brown communities</p>		<p>Workforce training program for green jobs with funding and prioritization for apprenticeships for low-income, Black and Brown communities, but not job guarantees</p>		<p>Workforce training program for green jobs with funding and prioritization for apprenticeships for lowincome, Black and Brown communities, with job guarantees</p>		

CO-GOVERNANCE										
	Extractive (0-1)		Better, but NOT Good or Great (2-5)			Energy Democracy (6-7)		Total		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	
Energy Ownership Structure	<p>Utilities are either regulated monopolies or oligopolies in a deregulated state. In this case, Investor-Owned Utilities (IOU) either own both generation and distribution and/or megacorporations control energy generation and sell to local IOU or community.</p> <p>Third-party companies funded by private capital own renewables and offer predatory services to provide energy to lowincome/wealth communities.</p>		<p>Utilities are deregulated, but still dominated by IOUs, however have commitment to procuring renewable energy from local and in-state generation projects. There are less mega-corporate controlled energy generating plants.</p> <p>Rural Electric Cooperatives and energy cooperatives exist, but invest in fossil-fuels and often reward dividends to white and wealthy members, locking out Black, Brown and Indigenous members.</p> <p>Municipal controlled energy exists, however there is no accountability or commitment to local renewable energy production, rather focus is on lowest cost energy.</p>			<p>Any investor-owned utilities that exist are purely distribution utilities and procure renewable energy from local and in-state generation projects, with prioritization from community-owned/governed projects that support EJ, Black, Brown and Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Rural Electric Cooperatives and energy cooperatives exist and have committed to investing in renewables.</p> <p>Municipal energy utility exists and there is a commitment to renewable energy production.</p> <p>Community Choice Aggregation energy procurement is not fully renewable.</p>		<p>All investor-owned utilities have been transitioned to labor and community control and full commitment to procuring renewable energy from local and in-state generation projects, with prioritization from community-owned/governed projects that support EJ, Black, Brown and Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Rural Electric Cooperatives and energy cooperatives are committed to 100% local renewable energy that its members fully benefit and own.</p> <p>Municipal energy utility is a commitment to local renewable energy production, with prioritization from EJ, Black, Brown and Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Community Choice Aggregation energy procurement is renewable and invests in local renewable generation, particularly from community-owned/governed projects that support EJ, Black, Brown and Indigenous communities.</p>		

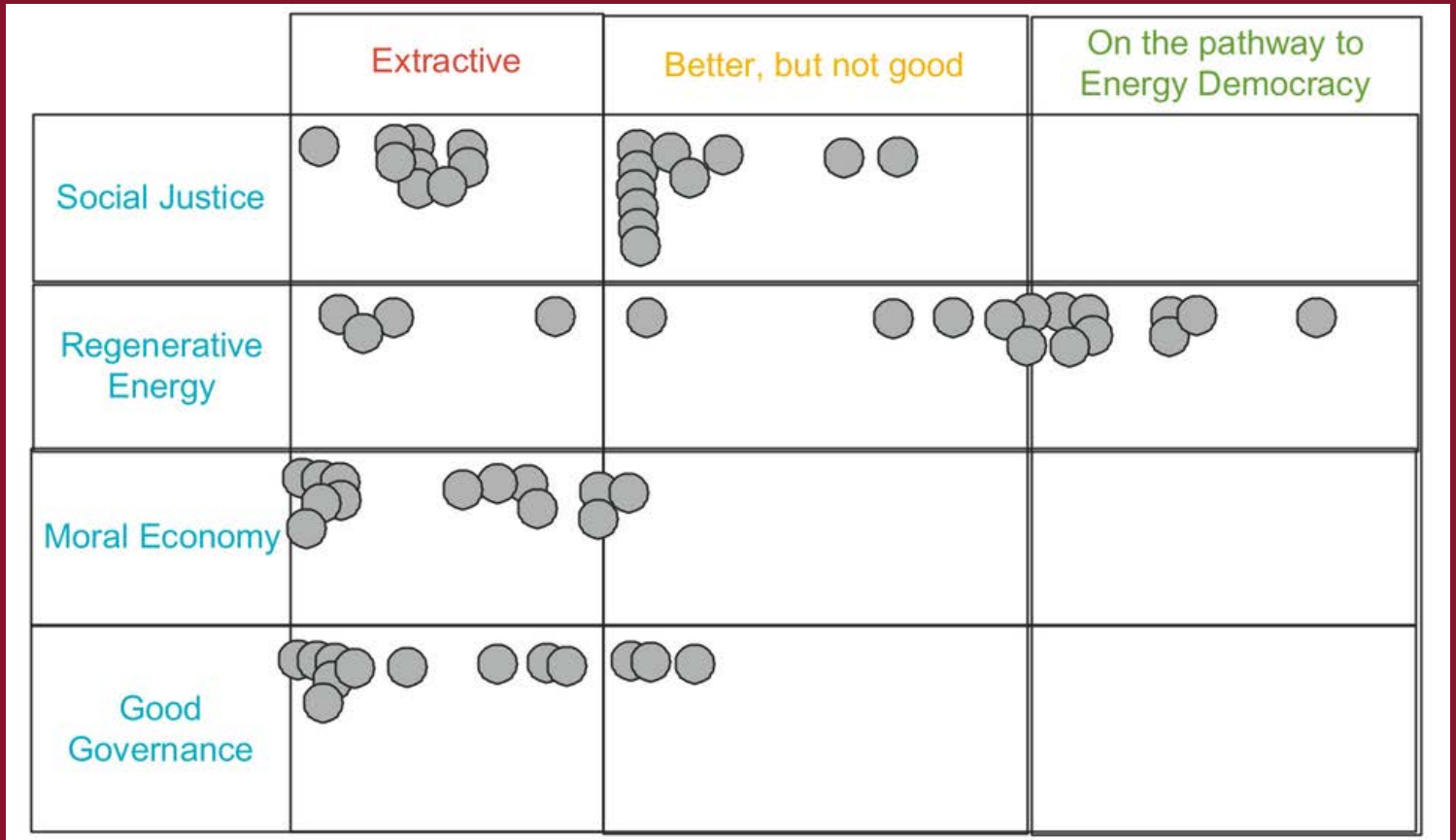
Using the Scorecard at the Summit

The scorecard was used in the People’s Energy Summit. Participants assessed their communities on various scales, for example, block or neighborhood, on the Energy Economy Spectrum. Summit participants responded to the [survey](#) across Southeastern Pennsylvania and Lancaster.



Results of the Scorecard at the Summit

Here is how participants responded.



What do these results tell us about the current state of energy democracy in communities in Southeastern PA?

How can these results be used to organize and chart a pathway towards energy democracy?

TRANSFORMING OUR SYSTEMS

In order to transform our systems, it is necessary for us to imagine the world that we want. Lead Climate Justice Organizer, Jana Korn, and PUC Working Group co-convener Charmaine Butler led participants in an art activity to collectively imagine and share what will make their communities thrive. They began by asking:



What would winning a people’s energy plan mean for you?

What would you want to see?

Summit participants envisioned a world with...

a stop to local and global militarization, living wage jobs, workforce development programs in the renewable/clean energy sector, after school programs for kids, clean air and water, equitable education, renewable/clean energy, end to mass incarceration, support for small business, government that works for the people they represent and not the corporations, racially equitable labor unions, the people united, unity of purpose, deeper understanding of each other, cooperatives, collectives, urban farms, library workers, safe and affordable housing and utilities, increased accessibility, and so much more.

All of these dreams are tied to a new system that works for all, recognizing there are groups all over who are working towards this vision. **Is it too much to expect decision-makers to provide and support the things we know will sustain healthy communities?** Together, participants at the Summit connected Climate Justice to all the ways we create and use energy to sustain our communities in an equitable way.



IS IT TOO MUCH TO EXPECT DECISION-MAKERS TO PROVIDE AND SUPPORT THE THINGS WE KNOW WILL SUSTAIN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES?



*You can take your community on a path of imagination. **Start with having community members close their eyes and share with them a vision of the future that reflects the values of the community.** Below is part of the script that Charmaine used to prep participants to draw/write their dreams of the future.*



I want us all to imagine that it is Fall of 2024. We're on the brink of a consequential presidential election. Across the country, things are tense. But...

In Pennsylvania, organizers, leaders, and people of faith are feeling buoyed and hopeful going into this election season. They have shown themselves, the state, the nation, and the world what is possible when people come together to build collective power.

The Pennsylvania PUC has recently ruled in favor of "The People's Energy Plan," requiring PECO to invest significantly in clean energy and move away from dirty polluting energy sources. This is a transformative moment....



The people have proven that, by coming together and doing **STRATEGIC, POWERFUL ORGANIZING**, we have the ability to **REWRITE OUR ENERGY FUTURE**, putting the values of people and the planet over profit, and forcing corporations and decision makers to listen to the people. But, it didn't happen overnight....

A growing number of advocates / leaders / people of faith and elected officials stood with the People's Energy Plan, showing that our strength is not just in the legal challenge but in the hands of the people demanding a change. We learned to **PUT PRESSURE ON THE PUC**, understanding the commissioners and the office's self interest and motivations....



Everybody at the People's Energy Summit went back home to their communities with a different reason to commit to the work. For many, it was the world they would leave behind for their children and grandchildren. For others, it was the stranglehold that energy bills had on their lives - forcing them to choose between grocery bills, rent, and keeping the lights on. Still others thought about the communities who were sick with the pollution of toxic fumes, from lead poisoning to heart disease to asthma....

**TOGETHER
WE
REWRITE
OUR
ENERGY
FUTURE!**



Regardless of why they were there, they knew the work was too important to leave to somebody else. They were ready to take the leap, follow the path that, based on years of prior organizing, organizers felt confident would lead us to a victory for our people and our planet and all that we love....”

Some questions to think about as you imagine yourself - in words or pictures - in the Fall of 2024. 2024 is important because that is when we will present our strategic plan for equitable and renewable energy systems to the PUC.

What are the political conditions necessary to win?

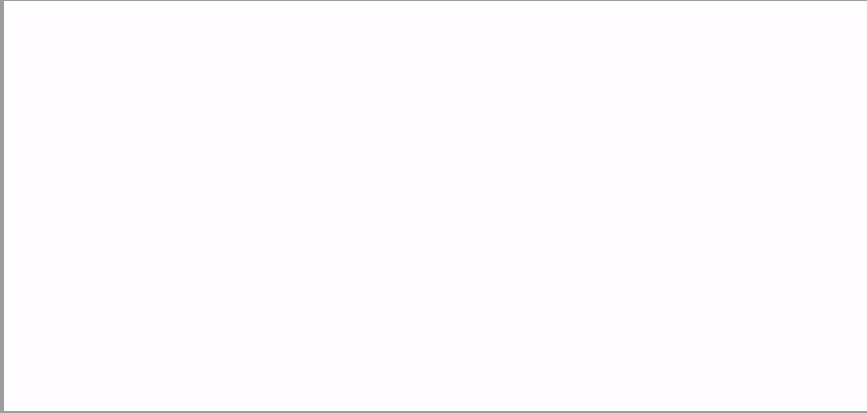
How are you feeling?

Who do you have with you?

Who have you brought along with you on this journey?



What have you learned?



What have you taught someone else?



What are four key moments in the story you want to tell about how you got to Fall of 2024? (draw or write out)

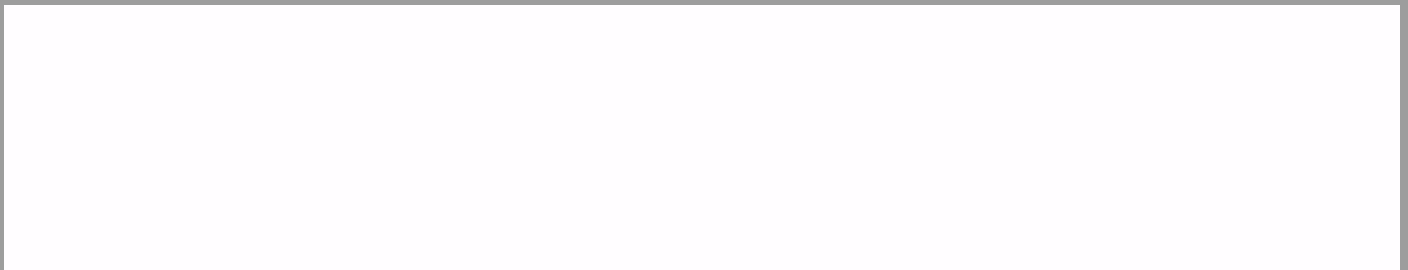


Questions to use for imagining the world that reflects the values we hold dear. These questions take our vision into reality.

What comes up for you as you imagine a People’s Energy Plan that would help our communities get what we need?



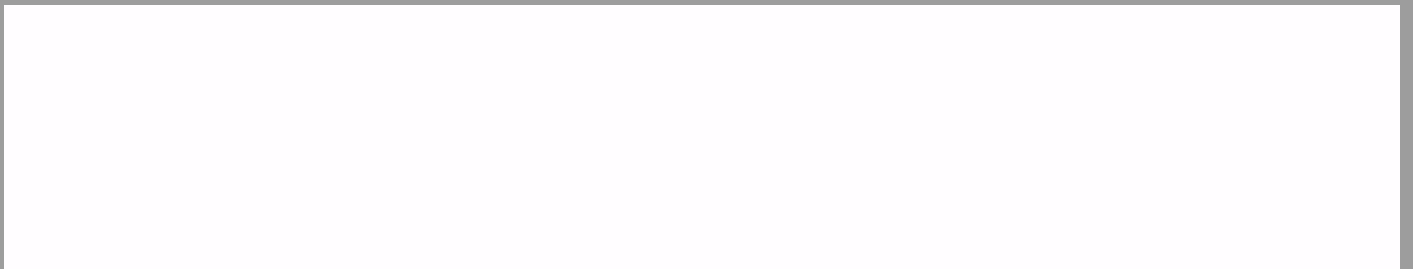
Why do you think we have to focus on building political power and having elected champions who will stand with us? Where can we start right now?



Are you ready to stand together with people across Pennsylvania to fight for our energy future?



**How can you bring this imagination to the next election cycle?
How can we talk about our energy future as a voting issue?**



ARE YOU IN? THIS IS HOW WE CONNECT!

Organizing your community

POWER's Climate Justice and Jobs team has a **PLAN** to fight for the conditions we need for OUR communities to thrive. This commitment to organizing includes electoral organizing and electing climate champions into office. Community organizing involves **TALKING TO OUR FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, AND OTHER NETWORKS** to highlight why and how climate justice is a voting issue. We will bring more and more people to stand with us. You can learn more about how to do relational organizing from the POWER organizing toolkit that can be found at:

<https://powerinterfaith.org/organizing-toolkit/>
Password protected: power2022



Questions we grapple with as a team to support action in our communities:

- Why do YOU care?
- What is at stake for YOU, your family, your community and your earth?
- Who are the people who YOU can bring together for collective strength?
- What does YOUR congregation or your community need in relation to this vision of a People's Energy Plan?
- What is important to YOU that has not yet been included?
- Why does it matter that YOU have influence and power towards your vision?

Join a POWER Climate Justice and Jobs Campaign

POWER is full of faith, connection, imagining and co-creation. We provide training and leadership and we welcome new participants!

PGW JUST TRANSITION CAMPAIGN

In Philadelphia, POWER is organizing a base of people and uniting allies to challenge PGW to transition away from dirty energy and towards being a heating and cooling service that offers affordable, renewable energy with fair labor and health and safety for us all. We are learning together, building relationships, and making strategic choices for using our power.



PUC & THE PEOPLE'S ENERGY PLAN

This is the powerful plan to take a People's Energy Plan to the PUC in 2024, backed by voices from all across the state as well as strong legal representation. All hands are needed to co-create and organize around this People's Plan.

PLACE-BASED ORGANIZING

POWER's Climate Justice and Jobs team also has local climate work in the Lancaster area, the Philadelphia Metro area, and Lehigh Valley. There are abundant opportunities to engage in electoral work to make sure we have elected leaders who will partner in our justice vision.

Climate Justice and Jobs Team Monthly Meetings

Join the regular Climate Justice and Jobs team monthly meeting:

last Tuesday of most months from 7:30-9pm, virtually (at least for now!).

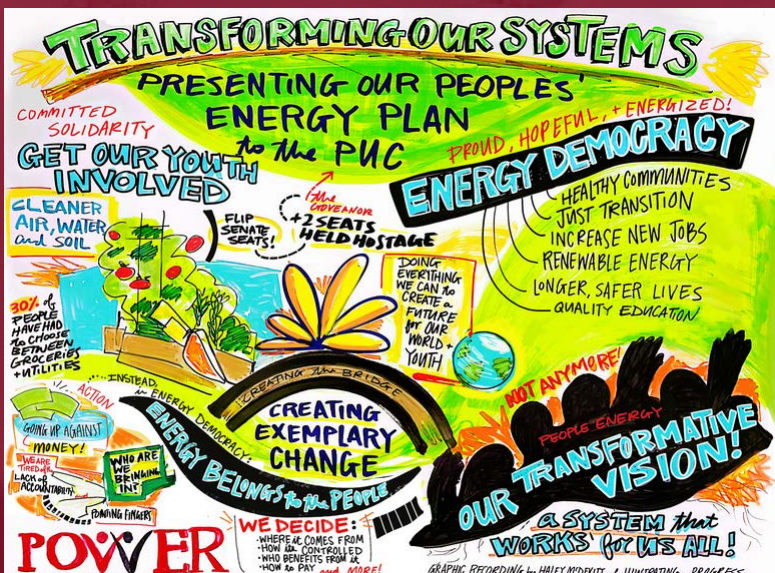
This is a chance to see which campaign is a good match for you, to learn about a topic to deepen our understanding of Climate Justice as it relates to our campaigns, and to develop organizing skills. We support each individual leader in taking next steps.

Register for the meeting and get a Zoom link on the POWER website calendar

<https://powerinterfaith.org/calendar/>

These are open meetings for anyone who is interested, no prior knowledge necessary. If you care about life on this earth, then come join us!

To find out more about our work, feel free to reach out to Julie Greenberg, JGreenberg@powerinterfaith.org.



WHY POWER LEADERS ARE CLIMATE JUSTICE VOTERS!



QUESTIONS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE VOTERS

Who are five people you will talk with about why we need elected champions in decision-making positions?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Check the box to the left if your answer is YES!

- Can you bring those five people together to inspire them each to reach out to five more people?
- Can you make sure your congregation, family and friends are a one hundred percent voting community every six months?
- Can you join POWER's voter registration drives, phone banks and candidate forums?

For more info, contact JGreenberg@powerinterfaith.org and check out the POWER website calendar: <https://powerinterfaith.org/calendar/>



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

How do you interact with the energy economy? As a ratepayer, energy worker, driver/rider?

Does PA's dirty energy economy help you and your community thrive with health, stability and safety?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

How would an energy economy that is affordable, renewable, has fair labor and health and safety, support you and the people you care about?

What percentage of your income do you spend on utilities?

<6%

6-15%

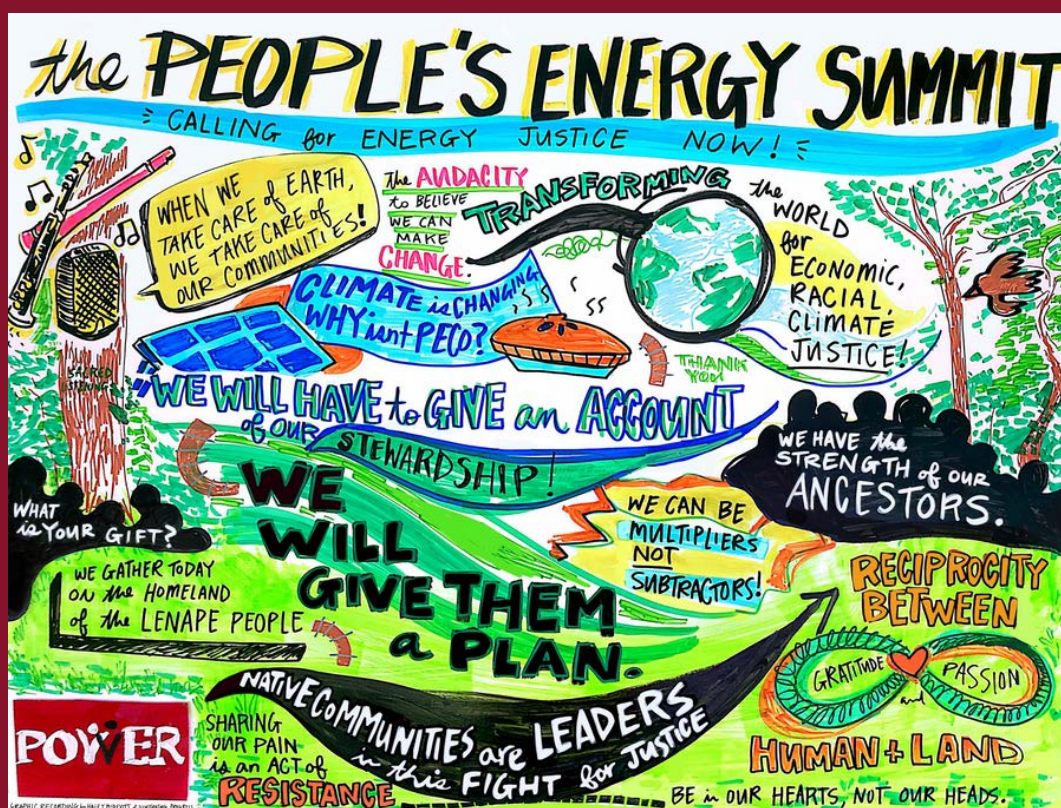
15-30%

>30%

Why do you care if other family members, neighbors or zip codes are experiencing excessive energy burdens (utility bills)?

Some Basic Facts About PA's Energy Economy

- Pennsylvania's marketed natural gas production, primarily from the Marcellus Shale, reached a record 7.1 trillion cubic feet in 2020, and the state is the nation's second-largest natural gas producer after Texas.
- Pennsylvania is the third-largest coal-producing state in the nation after Wyoming and West Virginia. It is the second-largest coal exporter to foreign markets after West Virginia.
- In 2020, Pennsylvania ranked second in the nation after Illinois in electricity generation from nuclear power. However, natural gas generation surpassed nuclear generation in 2019 to provide the largest share of in-state electricity generation.
- Over half of Pennsylvania households use natural gas as their primary home heating fuel, and the state's 49 underground gas storage sites--the most for any state--help meet regional heating demand in winter.
- Pennsylvania is the third-largest net supplier of total energy to other states, after Wyoming and Texas.
- What is important to YOU that has not yet been included?



Energy Burden in PA

- Energy burden is the percentage of household income that is spent on utilities such as gas and electric.
- An energy burden of 6% of household income is considered acceptable by the federal government. Anything more is an unfair burden. Some think 3% is a more reasonable limit for how much of the income pie is spent on energy.
- As of 2016, Philadelphia ranked 4th for highest energy burden by as much as 30% of Household Income spent on utilities.
- “According to Department of Energy Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) Tool the national average energy burden for low-income households is 8.6%, three times higher than for non-low-income households which is estimated at 3%. In some areas, depending on location and income, energy burden can be as high as 30%. Of all U.S. households, 44%, or about 50 million, are defined as low-income.”

Energy burdens add to systemic racism and inequality.

We believe energy should be a human right.

- During COVID there was a moratorium on utilities shut offs. However, when that ended, 1+ million people had their utilities shut off in PA in March-April 2021. Communities facing shut offs are also suffered greater impact from COVID. “Many of these same communities were hardest hit by COVID-19 in the early months of the pandemic, experiencing both health issues at a much higher rate and also being more likely to lose their jobs and income. This furthers the need for policy changes that will help Black and Latinx communities to maintain affordable home utility service, as these communities recover from health and economic consequences of the pandemic.”
- Philadelphia energy burden statistics
- Community Legal Service - Understanding Racial And Ethnic Disparities In Health Outcomes And Utility Insecurity Resulting From Covid-19

Additional Resources that inspire the work

All resources are hyperlinked - click on the underlined text to find more information.

- POWER's Climate Justice and Jobs [website](#)
- Energy Democracy:
 1. [Energy Democracy Scorecard](#) - Use this tool to dig deeper into each pillar and help your community chart a pathway towards Energy Democracy.
 2. [“Communities Seek To Reclaim Power With Energy Democracy Tools”](#)
 3. [Energy Democracy Project](#)
 4. [Democracy Collaborative strategies card deck](#)
 5. [The Fight for Energy Democracy and Public Power](#)
 6. Book: *Energy Democracy Project: Advancing Equity in Clean Energy Solutions* by Denise Fairchild and Al Weinburg
 7. Book: *Revolutionary Power: An Activist Guide to a Just Transition* by Shalanda Baker
- [People's Utility Justice Playbook & Utilities History Companion](#)
- [PECO & PA Electric Grid Role-playing Script.](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency Game about the sources of the electric grid](#)
- [Scorecard: Economy for the Common Good created by Christian Felber](#)
- [LittleSis: Powerlines 101](#)
- [People's Plan for PA co-created by POWER and other organizations in the Thriving PA coalition](#)
- [A People's Orientation to a Regenerative Economy](#)
- [Movement Generation: From Banks and Tanks to Cooperation and Caring: A Strategic Framework for a Just Transition Zine](#)
- Other People's Energy Plans from across the country
 1. <https://peoplesenergymovement.org/peoples-energy-plan>
 2. <https://secure.everyaction.com/WtYWRqmnBUi0w5VVkRla8Q2>
 3. <https://www.empowerkentucky.org/peoples-plan/>