Black Work Matters: Green Jobs Report
Preface

To build a city of opportunity for all, we need to invest in, and support, those most disenfranchised and marginalized. The saying goes that "a rising tide lifts all boats." But that only works when all of us are in good, quality boats together. Unfortunately, far too many of our city's residents are stuck on a boat that is taking in water, or residents are hanging on to driftwood just to survive.

At the POWER Poverty Summit in 2016, in partnership with Unite Here and OIC America, we examined the challenge of economic inclusion in our report, Black Work Matters. The report explored how Black communities in Philadelphia face poverty and a lack of living-wage job opportunities that can be pathways towards economic transformation. The report elevated how creating living-wage jobs in the booming service and hospitality sector could support and sustain healthy families and communities. Further, the POWER Poverty Summit laid out a platform to end poverty in Philadelphia in 10 years. One plank of the Poverty Summit's Black Work Matters platform explicitly called for inclusive opportunities in the renewable energy sector. Black Work Matters: Green Jobs deepens and expands the Green Jobs plank of that platform.

When Pope Francis published Laudato Sì: On Caring for Our Common Home, he amplified the call across generations connecting poverty to the environment. He wrote, "the cry of the earth is the cry of the poor." We release Black Worker Matters: Green Jobs to examine how we can build the Beloved Community through the opportunity of a renewable energy and a twenty-first century economy to enhance economic, physical and social wellbeing of all Philadelphians, in particular Black, Brown, and low-income residents of Philadelphia. We identify steps for a just transition to a healthy, sustainable economy that works for all.

With the foundation of Black Work Matters, we now look at how the same communities that face high unemployment and poverty also experience insecurities exacerbated by a changing climate, such as a lack of access to affordable food, energy, housing, water, and land. We identify how Green Jobs can be a gateway to a just and moral economy, one in which we prioritize our children's health, living-wage jobs, and a life-sustaining planet.
Acknowledgements and Gratitude

The work of POWER to advance solutions at the intersection of race, economics, and climate takes place within a web of committed and caring partners both individuals and organizations. We are indebted to those who have come before us and those who will come after us – named and unnamed – who have forged and will implement the path towards climate justice rooted in racial justice, labor rights, and the defense of the sacred. And our work is shaped by the local leadership and presence of the following:

Rev. Greg Holsten, Bishop Dwayne Royster, David Koppisch for their leadership and support. Paula Paul, Frances Upshaw, Terri Burgin, Susan Saxe and POWER’s Economic Dignity Team for their critical support shaping this work. Beulah Osueke, Ian Zeitlin, and Rachel Ternes for their support in communications and design.

Our partners at Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT), in particular Kim Hyunh, Eileen Flanagan, George Lakey, Greg Holt and Ryan Leitner and so many active members for their partnership, leadership and research to advance a more just vision for Philadelphia and our region.

YouthBuild Philly for their engagement with POWER to share stories of students who are working towards a better future not only for themselves, but for their community and the city as a whole. We particularly want to thank Briel Moore, Sheleia Quarles, Shirley Williams, George Jenkins, Marty Molloy, Peter Celona, and Sarah Burgess.

Rebecca Reumann-Moore and Eva Gold for their interviews of workers at Solar States. And thank you to Kattrell from Solar States for sharing his story.

Mitch Chanin of 350.org, Christopher Scott of Centennial Parkside CDC, Sean Garren of Vote Solar, and Alexa Ross of Philly Thrive for their feedback on the report.

Philadelphia Climate Works, Green Justice Philly, and PA-IPL for centering equity and justice in climate efforts in the city and Soil Generation for advancing principles of community and liberation in land and sustainability. The Energy Coordinating Agency for their long history of advancing energy-efficiency and green programs for low-income residents and PULP for its long-standing advocacy for energy affordability.
Executive Summary

The challenges of poverty do not stop at wages and jobs. As we face the moral, scientific, and economic crisis of a changing climate, people living in poverty are already on the frontlines experiencing the negative impacts. Climate change will make access and affordability to food, energy, water, and quality air much harder. Rising seas, rivers and water threaten 21% of the city’s land - and will squeeze out people who cannot pay for increased housing costs.

We can, and must, act to challenge this impending climate catastrophe that is fueled by an inequitable economy and will exacerbate the challenges of poverty in our city. Thankfully, if our public and private institutions invested in a climate-just economy that provides family-sustaining Green Jobs for residents and economic ownership opportunities for communities, we could lift 20% of families out of poverty. That is 15,000 jobs over a 10 year time frame that could lift anywhere from 50,000 to 75,000 people out of poverty. Last year, POWER set a goal of ending poverty in Philadelphia in 10 years. Investment in Green Jobs is one-fifth of the way there. But we need action.

As federal solutions fail to take on this challenge of poverty and climate catastrophe, we are witnessing local communities and elected officials taking the necessary action for a just transition. Recently, Mayor Kenney joined with over 300 Mayors from across the nation to adopt the Paris Climate Accord, with the Kenney Administration going so far as to pledge working towards 100% renewable energy. This is important. And how we get to the 100% is even more critically important, otherwise, we will see a rising tide, with just a few boats and the rest of the city hanging onto driftwood.

POWER believes that we can make this transition equitable when we invest in a new economy, a climate-just economy, which creates tangible jobs to help lift people out of poverty, while caring for the planet. We need to:

- Invest in renewable energy systems, like solar, that not only cut emissions, but also unburden low-income residents from high energy costs;
- Challenge the status quo in who controls energy; and
- Create community wealth, changing the game of poverty all together.
In this report we find that:

- We could witness the creation of 15,000 new jobs that can lift at least 1 in 5 families out of poverty with strategic, smart and targeted investments in Green Jobs ranging from increased transit opportunities and building out local food systems to creating solar throughout the city and region.
- If PECO purchased 20% of its electricity from local solar installations, it could create 2,700 annual jobs in construction and installation - jobs that often average $20 - $26 per hour.
- Renewable energy can generate two to three more times wealth in a community when jobs are local and ownership is maintained by the community. If focused in communities like the neighborhoods of North Philadelphia identified in Black Work Matters, this can help tackle the racial wealth gap in this city.

This report highlight solutions that PECO, City Officials, State Officials, and all of us can take to set this forward. Key solutions POWER recommends in this report include:

- PECO must commit to procuring 20% of its electricity from local renewable energy generated and owned by residents the five county-region, with a particular focus on community ownership and Green Job investments in low-income communities;
- City officials must mandate racial equity standards in all city projects, create a public bank to invest in community Green Jobs, and repurpose some vacant land for community-owned solar;
- State officials must create a more robust renewable portfolio standard, establish equitable and transparent Pay-As-You-Save programs to support low-income participation in renewable energy; and establish a Just Transition Fund to fund community and laborers transitioning from a fossil fuel economy to a renewable energy one;
- We must unite around racial and economic justice, build across the region and the state; and deepen participatory and collaborative efforts to help build the Beloved Community.
Part I: The Moral Mandate to Build an Economy that Serves Workers, Communities, and the Planet

"We must choose community and care of the earth over chaos and greed," spoke Reverend William Barber III. We stand at a juncture today: will we choose to build a city and region that centers community and the earth, or one that continues to prioritize greed, pollution, and inequity?

As members of a faith-based movement, we are called to be stewards, caretakers, and protectors of our Earth and we are called to build community that centers and loves even the most marginalized and oppressed. Therefore, as POWER advocates for policies and economic solutions, we hold both of these inextricable truths together. We can build an economy that is racially just that prioritizes the dignity of workers and impacted communities, while also protecting a life-sustaining planet.

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; 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.

Sheleia Quarles, YouthBuild Philly - North Philadelphia
If I could change something what would make solar and green jobs more possible it would be... education. There should be a green job track in every school for our future. We all should understand what is going on, the more we know earlier, the more we talk about it. Every time I talk about solar panels [at home], people see it as something for people outside of our community, something others can have. But when the power went out, we had no way to turn energy back on, no batteries... we need a back-up, a new grid. People need to see something happen. When the transmission blew [in Nicetown] - that should have been a good example of something [needing to happen]. Putting solar on roofs - it would be great to do it for everyone in the neighborhood.
The challenges of a changing climate in an extractive economy, unfortunately, add destructive impact to a city that already struggles with extreme inequity in employment, health, education, housing, food, energy, and life outcomes.

If climate change is allowed to continue its catastrophic course, these current inequities will become far worse. Climate change, unchecked, will:

- Lead to rising seas, rivers and water that could subsume 21% of Philadelphia’s land mass;¹
- Hasten land displacement and spread water contamination threatening healthy drinking water;
- Cause more intense weather and droughts that will impact food supply and increase prices making it harder for people to access and afford good food;
- Increase the days of oppressive heat and air toxins and increase health vulnerabilities such as asthma and hypertension;
- Escalate demand for energy and drive up costs of energy needed to heat and cool homes; a challenge that will uniquely impact low-income residents considering struggling to pay bills now, as over 312,000 households had their electric and/or gas terminated in 2015 (over 112,000 are PECO customers);²
- Threaten economic stability due to increased sick days from pollution, migration caused by climate pressure, and food insecurity due to extreme weather events.

Distressingly, these impacts are not some far-away future that can be avoided. They are already experienced by our city’s Black, Brown and low-income residents right now and are only getting worse. For example, in US Congressional District 1 (which includes North Philadelphia) 28% of the families faced some energy insecurity, meaning an inability to pay utility bills or faced disconnection of energy supply.³

Sixty percent reported some cumulative hardship in attaining, providing or accessing water, energy, food, and housing.⁴

Combined with the unemployment and poverty numbers detailed in Black Work Matters, the picture is clear: that Philadelphia is currently not a city of opportunity for all. And as we face the impacts of a changing climate, these inequities will only be exacerbated.

Climate change is hastened by the continued burning of fossil fuels. **Our city needs to create a just transition** away from a fossil fuel heavy economy to a renewable energy one that centers both labor and community.

Our brothers and sisters working in the fossil fuel industry face tremendous challenges moving forward - jobs have slowed and decreased due to market challenges, increased automation, and a growing awareness of emission impacts on our planet. A transition cannot demonize their work or their livelihoods. Furthermore, communities near fossil fuel plants have suffered from long-standing pollution and poorer health outcomes. These are also zones of decreased job opportunities and economic well-being. Moving forward, we need to identify new economic opportunities for workers currently in fossil fuel industries so that they are supported in moving towards a healthy future and support impacted communities with transformative economic opportunities that move away from fossil fuels towards healthy and sustainable communities.

For example, Service-sector industries which employ many Black and low-income residents in our city, and a major area of focus in *Black Work Matters* are at risk of pollution and climate disruption. For example, oil spills like the BP Oil Spill in New Orleans destructively impacted the tourist industry that was a significant source of employment. Here in Philadelphia, we celebrated airport worker’s successful unionization and victories in hourly pay and working conditions. Yet, we need to ensure that they have jobs in the future, building responses to climate crisis before it undermines employment sectors, such as tourism.

**What is a Just Transition?**

The Climate Justice Alliance (CJA) provides leadership, principles, and vision for what is a Just Transition. According to CJA: "Just Transition is a vision-led, unifying and place-based set of principles, processes and practices that build economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy a regenerative economy. This means approaching production and consumption cycles holistically and waste free. The transition itself must be just and equitable; redressing past harms and creating new relationships of power for the future through reparations. If the process of transition is not just, the outcome will never be. Just Transition describes both where we are going and how we get there."

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5 Please refer to the Climate Justice Alliance's Principles for a Just Transition, found here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxqkHpjiFq_eWk9QR1JwNFRDSndzZEVwRmtWZkZFcXdWWTBn/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxqkHpjiFq_eWk9QR1JwNFRDSndzZEVwRmtWZkZFcXdWWTBn/view)
Part III: Lifting People out of Poverty through Green Jobs

Locally, POWER seeks to implement this transition through programs and policies that support workers and communities with efforts like retraining, job counseling, pension guarantees, increased housing efficiency programs, development of models for low-income and community of color owned renewable energy, development of land trust, and a myriad of other programs. In this report, we focus primarily on one particular piece required in this transition: a deeper investment in Green Jobs and community owned solar that can actively create solutions to inequity and the climate crisis.

POWER believes that Green Jobs must be rooted in racial justice. This means that we need our city and companies to invest intentionally in neighborhoods that suffer the most from fossil fuel pollution, environmental degradation, deep poverty, high unemployment and in households with returning citizens. According to the NAACP, Green Jobs are not only a great pathway out of poverty, but are also a good strategy to address recidivism by supporting formerly incarcerated individuals with good paying jobs.⁶

POWER defines the type of Green Jobs to include: energy efficiency retrofits, renewable energy manufacturing, installation, and construction, water infrastructure, urban agriculture and fisheries, landscaping, bike manufacturing/retail and repair, public transportation, recycling and zero-waste programs, composting, and green building construction. A broad and inclusive definition of Green Jobs encompasses tens of thousands of jobs in the Philadelphia region.

Green Jobs can be good-paying jobs. For example, construction and installation of rooftop solar averages $26/hour,⁷ which is roughly the living wage for a family with one working adult and child.⁸

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⁶ Patterson, Jacqui. NAACP. “Intersections: Environmental and Climate Justice and NAACP Game Changers.”
⁸ Please refer to the MIT Living Wage Calculator for more information. Accessed here: [http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/42101]
Estimating the exact number of Green Jobs is an emerging field. Resources need to be invested in researching, modeling, coordinating, and educating about jobs in all of the relevant sectors as we move forward to a green economy. Research and reports from around the world by academic institutions, nonprofits, small business networks, and local to federal governments, including the US Department of Energy, provide insights into inclusive Green Jobs (please refer to end-notes).9

Overall, if we were to aggressively invest in building out opportunities in local food systems, increasing transportation access, weatherizing our homes and buildings, investing in zero-waste systems, and fully realize the Power Local Green Jobs Campaign, it is feasible to see the creation of 15,000 jobs (short and long-term) created over a 10-year time-period. If these jobs were located and targeted to impacted communities as detailed in Black Work Matters, this could lift over 1 in 5 families out of poverty. (To avoid double-counting efficiency jobs, it is important to note that the City has already committed towards this effort through the Philadelphia Energy Authority’s Energy Campaign that promises over 4,600 new jobs.)

Yet, because a job is green, does not mean the job is equitable. If we want to achieve the goal of lifting nearly 1 in 5 families out of poverty through Green Jobs, we need to make sure that we are prioritizing those most impacted where family poverty is highest, ensure that these jobs are living wage jobs, ensure that workers have a right to unionize and bargain for good working conditions, and also find ways to turn short-term green job efforts into long-term opportunities.

**A Snapshot of Green Jobs Potential for People Living in Poverty in Philadelphia**

![Diagram showing Green Jobs Potential](image)

*Data Estimates from the Center for Neighborhood Technology, NREL JEDI, and the Tellus Institute. These numbers do not account for the Philadelphia Energy Authority Campaign.*

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Part IV: Opportunities Specifically in Renewable Energy for Philadelphians

While POWER holds a Green Jobs frame that covers multiple sectors and issues, POWER is currently engaged in a particular campaign to bring solar jobs into the city, known as Power Local Green Jobs. There is ample opportunity to expand Philadelphia’s role in the renewable energy economy. For example:

- Philadelphia’s rooftops alone have the potential to generate over 5,000 gigawatt hours of electricity, which is enough to power over 30% of the region’s total energy consumption needs alone\(^{10}\) - and lead to massive investments in job creation and community wealth building. Large roofs such as these of churches, recreation centers, and government buildings are particularly relevant.
- The city has over 40,000 vacant lots that have the potential for green investments from urban agricultural development and renewable energy production to building affordable and low-income housing that is safe, healthy, and sustainable.
- The Philadelphia Energy Authority has launched an Energy Campaign that invests one billion dollars into energy efficiency, retrofitting, and solar development and promises to directly hire over 4,600 people, creating/maintaining over 10,000 local jobs over the next ten years.
- The city’s current Rebuild effort to invest in our public libraries, parks and recreation centers has the potential to create good jobs and sustainable solutions that care for the earth if done well.

Renewable Energy Jobs are growing nationally
Today, renewable energy employs more people than the fossil fuel industry combined. Additionally, over 2.2 million Americans are employed doing work in energy efficiency (such as home weatherization contractor).\(^{11}\)


A national study by Synapse, 350.org and the Labor Network of Sustainability shows that a move to reduce emissions by eighty percent by 2050 will lead to deep investments in programs to create renewable energy, secure healthy and efficient homes, build out better public transportation, and innovate new tech and manufacturing jobs. These investments can create over 550,000 new jobs nationally each year between now and 2050. Philadelphia should be sure to get its share of the national shift towards sustainable living.

Renewable Energy Jobs in Pennsylvania

There are over 57,000 clean energy jobs in Pennsylvania with projected growth of over 8% this year. In 2016, 3,061 people were employed in the solar industry, a 23% increase, but leaving the state ranked 43rd in solar jobs per capita. If Pennsylvania were to commit to transitioning to 100% renewable energy by 2050, Pennsylvania would experience nearly 500,000 job-years, or an average of 14,300 job-years per year.

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15 A job-year is equivalent to saying one job for one year. If that job were to continue the following year, the same job would equal two job years. A “job” is less specifically time-bound unless its annotated as temporary, short-term, or long-term or project based.
Renewable Energy Jobs in Philadelphia

The majority of the clean energy jobs are in good paying construction, maintenance, and manufacturing jobs that are attainable through training for all people. Over 17,000 of the state’s clean energy jobs are in the Philadelphia metropolitan region. But this is well-below the city’s potential for clean energy and Green Jobs.

The potential for solar energy in the entire PECO territory, the five county-region, is nearly 8.7 GW of solar capacity (just over 3 GW of residential solar and 5 GW of commercial-scale solar), enough to power over 1 million homes in the region.16

What does this mean for jobs? According to findings by the Berkeley Renewable and Appropriate Energy Lab, 7 to 10 jobs are created for every 1 MW of installed solar capacity for the project development.17 Based on these findings, to achieve 8.7 GW of energy (8700 MW of installed solar), this would create over 60,000 installation and construction jobs. However, this 60,000 job-number does not necessarily represent new and long-term jobs. To get a better sense of long-term job creation, we examine two hypothetical scenarios.

Residential Solar Potential: To achieve the residential rooftop potential of 3 GW of installed solar, imagine this build would require the development of 300,000 10-kw projects. Scenarios run by the National Renewable Energy Lab’s JEDI modeling shows that this would create over 850 annual construction and installation jobs, over 275 in annual supply-chain jobs, and over 200 annual induced jobs totaling over 1,300 annual jobs in solar.

Commercial Solar Potential (such as using schools, nonprofits, etc...): To meet the commercial potential of over 5 GW of installed solar, imagine this would require 25,000 200-kw projects. JEDI modeling shows this would create over 950 annual construction and installation jobs, over 270 in annual supply-chain jobs, and over 240 annual induced jobs totaling over 1,400 annual jobs in solar. These estimates do not include the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the solar arrays.

Overall, achieving the technical capacity of 8.7 GW of installed solar in the city and the surrounding counties, requires a massive jobs program that would create roughly 2,700 long-term annual jobs.18 The Local Power Green Jobs campaign is calling for these goals to be met over the next 10 years - 20% by 2025.

18 Extrapolating that numbers from above are difficult without deeper technical analysis, assessment and specifications that go beyond this report.
While the growth of the renewable energy sector is exciting, it is important to call out two important challenges. First, the industry’s failing to make good on racial equity in the workforce. For example, despite growth in solar and increasing employment of women, this sector grossly under-employs people of color. This is a tragic mistake that we cannot afford in our city, as the Black Work Matters report highlights that the deepest unemployment rates are for people of color.

Furthermore, in order to achieve the residential build-out of solar, it would require an intensive investment in roof and home-repairs, which would be required also create job opportunities in construction and roofing that are not detailed in this report and the financial and infrastructure investments needed must be designed and established to ensure energy affordability for the city’s, region’s, and state’s most marginalized and disenfranchised residents.

... despite growth in solar and increasing employment of women, this sector grossly under-employs people of color. This is a tragic mistake that we cannot afford in our city, as the Black Work Matters report highlights that the deepest unemployment rates are for people of color.

Potential for Annual Solar Jobs in Philadelphia Region if PECO meets 20% Demand

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*Data based on estimates using NREL Solar JEDI program building out 3 GW of residential solar PV, 5 GW of commercial solar PV.*
We do not want just a technical transition to solar, wind, or geothermal energy. We want all these forms of safe energy with guaranteed energy affordability and rights to access and an inclusive, healthy jobs for all and a fair transition for workers who now work in the fossil fuel industry, but will need new jobs in order for life to continue on the planet. We do not want to repeat the past. We claim this opportunity to truly build the Beloved Community.

Building Local Wealth

Challenging poverty is not just about jobs, but also about building local wealth in many different ways. Renewable infrastructure can be owned by community residents if we create the right structures and incentives. In fact, local ownership of renewables can create up to two to three more jobs in renewables and could keep over three times as much wealth in a neighborhood compared to energy controlled and maintained by outside business and corporations. When energy dollars stay local and circulate locally, a multiplier effect spreads benefits through communities. With White Americans having nearly 13 times more wealth than Black Americans and 10 times more than Latinx nationally, a high priority for economic development must be policy and incentives that build inclusive local wealth. An enormous area for further policy and organizing is the creation of low-income models of financing and ownership.

Shirley Williams, YouthBuild Philly - North Philadelphia

[At home] I ask... do you ever read PECO bill? How much do they [community] pay and how much they could save with solar? It [Solar] is basically free energy. We can be successful - create better environments and support community. And we need people to understand the impacts of gentrification. For solar, you need to be long-term owner, they [people in community] don’t know if they will be there. People think it’s just racism, or it is just college students for why people are losing homes. People don’t know why gentrification happens and that things change - it’s because the economy is messed up.

Part V: Recommendations to support Renewable Energy Opportunities to Move People out of Poverty

One place to start is that we start looking at energy as a right to survive and thrive. Energy is vital for life and we must start looking at it through this lens. Energy shut-offs lead to abandoned homes, homelessness, loss of family rights, hazardous living conditions, and poorer health outcomes, among other things. To care for the city’s most impacted residents, we need to ensure this basic need is met. We call on PECO and our city and state leaders to commit to no longer terminating customers from energy services. We need to secure energy security so that no one is in a position to choose heating over eating. From there, we can start building a better climate-just Beloved Community.

We can no longer accept that a rising tide will lift all boats. Instead we must build new resilient structures to create the world where communities today for generations to come can thrive. And while a just transition will take time, here are initial steps that can be taken in four sectors to help advance this work: the utility, our city’s decision-makers, state decision-makers, and us.

**Recommendations for our Utility Company**

PECO is in a position to expand renewable energy in our city. The utility company is not in the business of generating electricity, instead PECO procures and distributes energy to its customers. We call for a significant part of PECO’s energy pie to come from local residents and communities, instead of the outside market. Instead of seeing funds flow outside of the region, we can support economic opportunity here in the city. The Power Local Green Jobs campaign, a faith-based movement sponsored by POWER and the Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT) demands that PECO:

1. Increase drastically, the purchase of local rooftops and local community-owned solar power so that 20% of electricity procured and distributed is sourced in a way that supports community development for all people in its service area by 2025.
2. Spur and target solar installation on suitable roofs and in suitable arrays in a way that benefits local employment and wealth-building in communities of color and those living in deep poverty, starting in North Philadelphia.
3. Prioritize construction, installation, and maintenance by local workers; prioritize creative models of low-income ownership, especially in neighborhoods detailed in Black Work Matters report that have been targeted with disinvestment and devastation from high unemployment areas.

When PECO rises to meet these expectations, as mentioned above, we will see the emergence of thousands of good local jobs. As we stated earlier, when PECO lives up to these demands, there is potential for over 2,700 jobs for the life of the project.
Recommendations for our City Leaders

A second call to action is directed to city policy-makers who can create opportunities for racial and economic inclusion. The following are opportunities where Philadelphia’s elected officials can lead and support the work for a Climate-Just Beloved Community. We believe that the Mayor and City Council should work to:

1. **Mandate a racially equitable labor standard.** The City’s two signature infrastructure programs: Rebuild and the Philadelphia Energy Campaign are opportunities to implement best Green Jobs policy and practice for Philadelphia. The city is investing one billion dollars into energy efficiency, retrofitting, and solar development that promises to create 10,000 local jobs (4,600 in direct hire) over the 10 year plan. The current Rebuild effort to invest in libraries, parks and recreation centers has the potential to create good jobs and sustainable solutions that care for the earth if done well. For both of these projects, the city’s hiring practices must meet inclusivity standards, implement robust enforcement, and enforce meaningful penalties for non-compliance. The programs must prioritize workers who have been trained in Green Jobs, yet have been left waiting in line for a job. Furthermore, project standards must use decision-making processes that include and center those who live in relevant neighborhoods and who most need employment.

2. **Pass legislation to research, design and establish a Philadelphia Public Bank to help resource and support revolving loan funds for community projects.** Too much of our city’s own resources are tied up in investment banks that do not hold the city’s residents and interests at heart. Further, many traditional banking institutions have failed to properly invest in renewable energy opportunities or they provide loans that require both good credit and have higher interest, leaving a gap in who can afford to participate in a renewable energy economy. A public bank would be positioned to hold residential well-being as part of its mission and could invest resources that build community wealth. Paralleling the public bank, we need other economic institutions and instruments to share risk fairly as we develop worker cooperatives and community-owned wealth building infrastructure. These funds can also be used to support investments in home and roof repairs that will make solar more viable for low-income residents.

3. **Repurpose the city’s 40,000 vacant lots to support Green Jobs Infrastructure.** Land Bank officials and City Council should create transparent and accessible pathways for communities to repurpose vacant land that upholds community wealth-building and family-sustaining job opportunities that create a greener city. For example, land can support urban agriculture as advanced by community-led organizations, such as Soil Generation; expand passive and eco-sustainable housing trusts for low-income residents; and actively consider, pursue and support the use of vacant and abandoned industrial land to build out renewable energy systems that can contribute to the production of renewable energy with a targeted carve-out for use, and control, by communities impacted by high unemployment, energy insecurity, and environmental pollution.
Recommendations for our State Legislators

A healthy and thriving city can only exist when we build across the state to shift towards policies that not only benefit Philadelphians, but establish pathways for Just Transition across the entire state. We need state policy and regulatory leaders to spur and support the growth of community-owned and inclusive renewable energy. The following are three key policies that the state should move forward to facilitate the installation of solar in Philadelphia:

1. Pass and Implement a robust and strong Renewable Portfolio Standard.
   One reason PECO does not procure much renewable energy is due to a very weak Alternative Energy Standard plan at the state level. We need our state legislators to work together, across the aisle, and see the shared commonalities and opportunities that renewable energy provides, whether it is in Philadelphia or Lackawanna County. We need a much stronger renewable procurement standard that not only prioritizes renewable energy development, but establishes specific standards for prioritizing low-income communities for investment, repairs environmental justice impacts, and promotes local ownership of solar. Such models can be found in Washington, DC’s most recent RPS, which requires that the District be powered by 50% renewables by 2032, with a specific focus on prioritizing and investing in the 100,000 low-income households. One initial fix the state legislation can do is to amend its virtual net metering policies to accommodate true community-solar. A true community-solar program would allow multiple residents, businesses, and organizations to connect their meters to a shared project that can build wealth and create local jobs. The state needs to remove the current barriers that limit community-ownership, such as allowing for multi-owner virtual net-metering. Additionally, community-net metering should provide an equity metric that allows for a more equitable tiered incentives to ensure equitable access and participation for low-income residents.

Linda Walker

"The monetary savings was of interest to me but not enough to get me to make a change... Then I gained a greater appreciation of the highly negative impact fossil fuels are having on our communities and our earth, and I became aware that there is great potential for creating solar jobs in communities with high unemployment.”

"No one pays. It's not right."
2. Establish an On-Bill Finance or Pay-As-You-Save (PAYS) program. Participating in solar (community or individual) requires up-front costs that eliminate many opportunities for those with little access to capital. One way to eliminate the barriers to financing is to establish the Pay-As-You-Save (PAYS) model that allows for homeowners and renters to pay for upgrades such as energy efficiency and renewable energy development through an on-bill financing program, without any upfront costs. Project costs are paid through their energy bill, at a rate that guarantees savings. These costs are tied to the electric meter, not the energy user, so when the property changes owners or tenants the utility continues to receive payment by the new energy user. After the costs are repaid (usually within ten years) the owner and tenant receive full benefits from energy creation and savings of the energy efficiency. However, these models must be done to ensure that the poorest and most-impacted residents have access to participate equitably and fully. This means creating clear regulatory guidelines with fairness and transparency in lending programs; creating a program design so renters at different points of tenure are guaranteed savings; and hedge against consumer debt defaults. One critical piece aspect would be for our local CDFI, The Reinvestment Fund, to provide loan-loss reserve funding to offset any risk of consumer debt in case failure to repay happens. A good model can be found in Kentucky through the leadership and work by Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) and Kentuckians for the Commonwealth to move rural electric cooperatives towards investing in energy efficiency that has used loan-loss fund to push forward a PAYS model.

3. Establish a state-wide Just Transition Fund. As discussed earlier, POWER believes that a transition to renewable energy must be just, inclusive, and prioritize communities that have been impacted by fossil-fuel extraction and workers that are currently in fossil-fuel industries but need to transition out to ensure sustainability on the planet. Just as we call on the City for a Public Bank, we call on the State to create a Just Transition Fund that provides guarantees for pension funds, dollars for training and placement programs, catalyzes renewable energy industries, and supports worker-owned cooperatives for current fossil-fuel workers. These funds should be made available for communities of color who have borne the brunt of environmental injustice and should support communities impacted by fossil-fuel extraction to help develop community-owned renewable energy as a pathway towards a healthy and vibrant economy and ecosystem.

Recommendations for us as part of the movement

Lastly, policy and corporate culture change are critical towards building the Beloved Community, but we also have critical role to play as citizens, movement-builders and people of faith. The following are three steps that we can take to do our part in this work:
1. **We must unite the movement to build power and make change through the lens of racial and economic justice.** Across our city and state there are multiple efforts pushing renewable energy solutions for the climate crisis. Campaigns such as solarize, anti-fracking organizing, and renewable procurement are welcomed and needed strategies to move us forward too, but alone are not enough. We need to do more to build power together as movement, and to organize around the central commitments of racial and economic justice on a livable planet. Bridging together multiple efforts through this justice lens can help unite the work in the city and the state to achieve the vision of the Beloved Community.

2. **We must build regionally and across the state.** We need policies at a state level to be successful and to achieve this we need to reach beyond our own borders, walls and geographic boundaries. We must join together to create transformative relationships among different cities, suburbs, and rural communities to advance the campaign for community-owned renewable energy and Green Jobs. And we need to build deeper and transformative relationships that link together the fate of Philadelphia’s communities of color with our suburban and rural neighbors who also face the challenges of economic exclusion and inequity.

3. **We must create a collaborative and participatory learning process to build awareness and support.** As people of faith, we must work intently in our Houses of Worship, our ethi-
Federal leadership is lacking, unemployment in Black communities remains high, the racial wealth gap continues to widen, and the climate crisis threatens all of us. We need bold local, regional, and state efforts to move forward. POWER offers these three recommendations outlined above to move Philadelphia and Pennsylvania forward. These calls to action center workers, communities, and identify ways to resource this work.

Philadelphia lags far behind its neighbors, and Pennsylvania even farther behind states with the best green energy economies. There is room for bold leadership to bring Philadelphia into the twenty-first century renewable energy economy. A gateway of opportunities beckons, let’s step through it, let’s turn the intertwined crises of extreme inequity and climate crisis into the greatest invitation we have ever had to build a Climate-just Beloved Community.