



2020 Presidential Candidates Transmission Policy Fact Sheet

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A flurry of climate plans have recently been released by presidential candidates. At ACEG, we believe modernizing and expanding our electrical grid is a key component of climate action. It is necessary to increase the [use and availability of low-cost renewable energy](#) resources that can meet 80% of our energy needs by 2050 with current technologies.

On a bipartisan basis, we will be routinely reviewing the climate plans of all declared presidential candidates and highlighting those that recognize the integral role our electrical grid can play in combatting climate change.

Presidential Candidates

Vice President Joe Biden

From the Vice President's [Plan for a Clean Energy Revolution and Environmental Justice](#):

Build a stronger, more resilient nation. On day one, Biden will make smart infrastructure investments to rebuild the nation and to ensure that our buildings, water, transportation, and energy infrastructure can withstand the impacts of climate change. Every dollar spent toward rebuilding our roads, bridges, buildings, the electric grid, and our water infrastructure will be used to prevent, reduce, and withstand a changing climate.

Representative Delaney

From the Representative's [\\$2 Trillion Infrastructure Plan](#):

Climate change has led to more frequent and dangerous storms, which have resulted in widespread damage across the country. These storms have had devastating effects including increased forest fires and flooding. What meteorologists deem as 100- year floods have been occurring with more frequency, leading to widespread destruction to land, people's homes, and public infrastructure. Recently in Iowa when the levees broke along the Missouri River, communities were flooded resulting in billions of dollars in damage and forcing people from their homes.

We also need to make our energy transmission systems more efficient to better conserve energy and avoid waste. We need to invest in and improve climate resilient infrastructure to protect communities against the effects of climate change, which is why Delaney proposes the creation of a \$60 billion Climate Infrastructure Fund that will allow state and local governments to invest in and prioritize projects that will expand and



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improve climate resilient infrastructure in addition to improving energy efficiency in our systems. This will also pay for Delaney's previously announced Carbon Throughway, an infrastructure project that will transport captured carbon from the Midwest and transport it for permanent sequestration and reuse in the Permian Basin.

Senator Gillibrand

From the Senator's [Plan to Tackle Climate Change](#):

As president, I will also work to get us to net-zero carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions — nationwide and across the economy. We must set our ambitions high and aim to achieve net-zero emissions in the next decade, and we will put enforceable standards in place to ensure our whole economy meets net-zero emissions no later than 2050.

In a decade, I'll strive to get us to 100% clean, renewable, and zero-carbon electricity, and I'll prioritize transforming our electric grid into a system that's designed to better handle renewable and distributed energy.

Senator Harris

From the Senator's [Plan to Combat the Climate Crisis](#):

But this isn't just a fight against something, it's a fight for something. While the climate threat is great, so is our opportunity. With American ingenuity and imagination, we can forge a Green New Deal to tackle the climate crisis, build a clean economy that creates good-paying jobs for the future, and confront environmental injustice head on.

That means modernizing our transportation, energy, and water infrastructure. It means accelerating the spread of electric vehicles, solar panels, and wind turbines. And it means making bold investments in innovative technologies to build a carbon free future.

Governor Hickenlooper

From the Governor's [Plan to Combat Climate Change](#):

A market-based and job-creating clean energy plan for America. Hickenlooper will also launch an ambitious effort to move the US to a clean energy future, with particular reliance on market-based and inclusive job-creating initiatives. These include:

Hickenlooper's infrastructure plan will include targeted spending on clean energy and climate change-related projects, including adaptation and mitigation. This includes \$200



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billion for investments to revolutionize America's transportation system, invest in renewable energy sources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, plus \$150 billion to make America's electric grid more reliable, secure, efficient and resilient.

Governor Jay Inslee

From the Governor's [100% Clean Energy for America Plan](#):

- Establishing refundable tax incentives to speed the development and deployment of clean technologies – including renewable electricity, energy storage, smart grid and advanced transmission and distribution, as well as other zero-emission technologies.
- Using federal lands, offshore waters and facilities to deploy more renewable energy and transmission. The federal government can accelerate renewable energy deployment on public lands that contain enormous resources –especially in the West. For example, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Dry Lake Solar Energy Zone in Clark County, Nev. now hosts 179 MW of solar power in job-creating clean energy projects that were developed more than twice as fast as traditional projects on public lands. Meanwhile, harnessing just 1% of our nation's technical offshore wind energy resource potential could power more than 6 million American homes.
- Expanding long-distance interstate and interregional transmission of clean electricity through expedited planning, broad cost allocation, and negotiated siting with state authorities, Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Department of Energy. And providing federal financing for anticipatory construction of transmission capacity to areas with significant queues of clean-energy generation capacity awaiting transmission.
- Enhancing utilization of existing transmission and distribution assets through Dynamic Line Ratings, demand-response, new sensors and controls, battery storage, and resilient distributed energy resources.

Tom Steyer

From Tom Steyer's [Framework for a Justice-Centered Climate Plan](#):

Every decision our government makes about infrastructure, purchasing, contracting, and investing taxpayer dollars must be aligned with achieving our climate targets, protecting workers' right to unionize, growing good jobs, and helping Americans build inclusive and prosperous communities. We have one chance to invest in the infrastructure that will serve our country in a warmer world, help us limit the effects of climate change, and showcase American leadership. Both government funding and private capital must play a major role. We must establish clear goals and rules for how investments flow to avoid

the same decisions that have created extreme inequality and unjust environmental degradation.

To ensure we are building a fair and sustainable country equipped for the 21st century, my plan will:

Dedicate \$2 trillion in federal funding over ten years, mobilizing trillions more in private capital, to long-overdue investments in America's infrastructure, including investments in clean transportation, water, operational systems, the energy grid, farms and rural development, building retrofits, maintenance, affordable housing, universal broadband, and more.

Andrew Yang

From Andrew Yang's [Grid Modernization Race to the Top](#):

Much of our electrical energy infrastructure is old, outdated, insecure, and far too dependent on dirty fossil fuels. Without renewed investment in new, cleaner assets and innovative management practices, our energy costs will become increasingly high and environmentally destructive.

We need to create an economic drive for utilities to invest in updating their infrastructure while motivating innovation. We can do this with a "Race to the Top"-type competition where utilities compete to enact certain reforms and the winners receive federal monies to reduce the capital costs of their investment.

Investor-owned utilities and municipal utilities & co-operatives would compete in two separate categories for a pool of \$5 billion dollars each. These utilities would be given two years to enact certain reforms or hit certain targets, with points being awarded for achieving the goals based on a schedule of points. Off-schedule points would be awarded by industry experts for innovation that achieves similar goals to the prescribed methods. A points floor would be set, and anyone above that floor would receive awards from the central pool proportional to their points.

Reforms and criteria would include, but not be limited to:

- Installation of smart meters
- Free, easy access for account holders to interval data
- Streamlined interconnection processes
- Short interconnection processing turnarounds
- Tariffs designed to encourage renewable systems of all sizes
- Implementation of active or passive control standards that enable real-time management of distributed assets not under direct utility ownership



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- Methods of differentiating and optimizing the financial concerns of administration, transmission, production, and consumption, as separate grid-system functions
- Net de-carbonization from the installation and retirement of various assets
- Stakeholder education and outreach, including account holders, developers, and contractors
- Robust IT security for metering and control systems
- Demonstrating a continued interest, past the end date of the Race to the Top, in continuing to implement these changes

Note: this fact sheet was last updated on July 29, 2019 and will be routinely modified as additional plans are released. If we are missing any plans that include details on the electric transmission grid, please contact us: <https://cleanenergygrid.org/contact-us/>