

# 2024 TRANSMISSION PRIORITIES

WITHOUT RAPIDLY IMPROVING TRANSMISSION, THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE BIDEN'S GOAL OF 100% CLEAN ENERGY BY 2035, MAXIMIZE THE BENEFITS OF THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT, OR PROVIDE CHEAPER, MORE RELIABLE ELECTRICITY TO AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS.

**Outlined below are the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund's transmission priorities, which we hope will serve as a guide to a just, equitable, and complete clean energy transition:**

## **Establish FERC as the Backstop Authority:**

FERC should have the authority to site and permit high-voltage lines, expand the list of categorical exclusions, and manage interregional transmission.

## **Create Comprehensive Cost Allocation Method:**

FERC should establish a clear long-term cost allocation method. FERC should require planners to define benefits that transmission offers to a region.

## **Improved Interregional Transmission:**

Regions should establish and/or increase interregional transfer capabilities such that they can transfer up to 30 percent of their own peak load to a nearby region. This transfer capability requirement would make the transmission system more reliable and resilient.

## **Deployment of Grid Enhancing Assets:**

Improving transmission requires not only the construction of new transmission lines, but also deployment of latest technologies, like reconductoring with more efficient wires, distributed electricity generation, and energy storage.

## **Microgrids:**

Microgrids should be integrated as an essential structure in transmission buildout. They are resilient to extreme weather, offer more control over energy generation and deployment, and can operate independently or as part of the electrical network.

## **Leverage existing rights-of-way:**

Directs FERC to deploy transmission infrastructure on existing rights-of-way, including highways, railroads, canals. Agencies of jurisdiction should assist FERC by publishing reports detailing how to site transmission projects on existing rights-of-way.



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## **Early and Sustained Community Engagement:**

Agencies should be required to engage in a meaningful process to develop, negotiate, and enter into a community benefit agreement with stakeholders.

## **Establishment of Environmental Justice offices:**

Codifies the establishment of the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and of the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council. These offices would improve coordination between federal agencies on Environmental Justice matters.

## **Create Environmental Liaisons for Tribal and Environmental Justice Communities:**

FERC and agencies of jurisdiction should also establish Environmental Justice liaisons to support ongoing consultation and provide meaningful public involvement opportunities during the development of a NEPA document for Environmental Justice communities and Tribal nations.

## **Requirement for community impact reports:**

The EPA should maintain the authority and duty to prepare community impact reports to assess a proposed action's consequences for environmental justice, and propose alternatives or remedies to these issues.



## **Inclusion of greenhouse gas projections in NEPA reviews:**

When preparing a NEPA document, FERC should consider the proposed action's possible effects on climate change. It should identify and propose alternative actions that would eliminate or reduce greenhouse gas emissions of the proposed action.



## **Including cumulative impact analysis in NEPA reviews:**

Environmental Impact Statements should evaluate and propose alternative actions that do not cause overburdened communities to bear cumulative environmental pollution impacts worse than those borne in other communities within a geographic area.