



Protecting Michigander's Health and Wallets in the Face of Attacks on Climate Programs

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In anticipation of the [2025 Michigan Healthy Climate Conference](#) in Detroit, local policy and community experts warn that emerging threats to climate justice pose significant risks to Michiganders' health, wallets, and future. The state must now step up to protect the well-being of all Michigan residents.

Threats to pollution reduction and climate resilience efforts

The Federal Administration's efforts to dismantle pollution standards and withdraw clean energy and climate funding threaten the health and resilience of Michigan communities. Low-income households and communities of color across the state have fought for decades for cleaner air, water, and land. Emissions from heavy industry, traffic, coal plants, and other fossil fuels add to heavy pollution burdens in places like [Southwest Detroit](#), contributing to [high rates of asthma](#), [adverse birth outcomes](#), [lung cancer](#), and other public health impacts.

These same communities are also vulnerable to the compounding effects of climate change, such as [extreme heat](#) and [wildfire smoke](#).

The Federal Administration has announced its intention to dismantle environmental protections, eliminate environmental justice programs, extend the life of coal plants, and

eliminate support for a transition away from fossil fuels—undermining ongoing efforts to address climate change and pollution across Michigan. Some of these threats to Michiganders include:

- **Coal pollution:** Executive orders and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) actions include the intention to reassess power plant emission standards and coal [ash impoundment rules](#); [prop up the coal industry](#); and develop [new reliability requirements](#) that may require ratepayers to pay to keep coal plants open—in contrast to [Michigan’s intention](#) to retire all coal plants by 2030.
- **Blocking state clean energy transitions:** Seeking to [block Michigan](#) and other states from transitioning off fossil fuels and onto wind, solar, and other carbon-free energy sources.
- **Limited enforcement:** Allowing polluters to [apply for exemptions](#) to continue emitting toxic air pollutants and [gutting the agencies](#) responsible for enforcement of environmental regulations.
- **Elimination of environmental justice work:** The EPA is [closing](#) all of its environmental justice offices and will no longer address the pollution disparities facing communities of color in Detroit, Flint, and across Michigan.

Threats to funding for community energy-efficiency improvements and the transition to a clean energy economy

Many Michigan households struggle to pay their utility bills, with the [heaviest burdens falling](#) on low-income, Black, Latinx, and rental households in places like Detroit.

Investments in energy efficiency, weatherization, and solar power—alongside bill assistance—can help alleviate these costs and provide resilience to climate impacts, but the Administration is cancelling funding and programs that support clean energy, climate resilience, and energy affordability across Michigan. Some of these include:

- **Eliminating staff support:** The entire staff of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) was [fired](#) from Health and Human Services, threatening access to bill assistance for the more than [430,000 Michigan](#) households who receive support from the program.
- **Rolling back clean energy incentives, including dedicated funds for low-income communities:** A proposed rollback of Inflation Reduction Act tax credits and threats to home electrification rebate, solar energy, and other such programs supporting

clean energy will [increase household energy costs](#), especially for low-income households.

- **Challenging funding for green infrastructure and energy efficiency:** Under the Inflation Reduction Act’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), Michigan Saves was [announced to be a subgrantee](#) of a successful “green banking” application. Green banks present an innovative financing approach to providing capital for infrastructure and energy efficiency improvements, particularly within underserved communities. To date, **funds to launch green banking have been frozen**, thus putting Michigan’s participation in the GGRF green banking initiatives – and funds that were to be awarded to Michigan Saves – at risk. [Court action](#) is pending.
- **Freezing funding:** A [leaked list](#) of 400 grants from the EPA include the proposed withdrawal of nearly \$80 million for Michigan projects (Table 1) supporting climate resilience, pollution reduction, and grants to groups including Flint and the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan.

Table 1. Michigan EPA grants facing likely cancellation.

Sources: [U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works](#), [Georgetown Environmental Law Review](#)

Awardee	Issue Area	Remaining Funding Threatened ¹
One Love Global	Water and Public Health Equity in Detroit	\$468,296
Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice	Community Air Quality System in Detroit	\$474,253
Alma College	Historic Fire Retardant Poisoning (PBB Disaster)	\$17,430
City of Flint	Community Engagement for Climate Resiliency	\$1,000,000
Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan	Efficient, Healthy, Resilient Buildings	\$19,997,987
Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan	Wild Rice Stewardship	\$2,999,833

¹ Includes remaining funding in grant, not original amount; additional grantees were listed but those grants were financially closed already.

Kalamazoo County Board	Healthy Homes	\$18,858,415
EcoWorks	Resilience Hubs	\$15,473,669
Southwestern Michigan Commission	Resilience Hubs	\$20,000,000
TOTAL		\$79,289,883

What Michiganders can do:

- **Share data and stories:** Document the harm being done and help spread the word about the effects of staffing cuts, funding freezes, and other actions to communities across Michigan.
- **Encourage Michigan's Congressional representatives to stand firm:** Although Michiganders are already feeling the effects of these actions, others have not yet been successful. Now is the time for Congressional leaders to give voice to the needs of their communities and to support legislative and legal solutions.
- **Talk to Michigan state legislators:** Encourage state legislators to explore ways in which the state can step up to fill gaps, innovate, and ensure that Michiganders have the resources and capacity to continue to build momentum towards equitable climate solutions and a successful transition to a clean energy economy.

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