



# Massachusetts Youth Climate Coalition Policy Principles

Members of MYCC and the thousands of youth we represent call for **equitable, science-based, and intersectional climate policy** that supports our [vision](#) for a thriving, interconnected world for ourselves and future generations. We've expressed our deep commitment to these principles through countless rallies, lobby meetings, and other bold and creative actions going back even further than the founding of the coalition in 2020.

**We advocate for policies that create:**

1. **Inclusive & Transparent Governance**
2. **Environmental Justice**
3. **Renewable Energy**
4. **Equitable Funding**
5. **Intersectional Climate Justice & Civics Education**
6. **Nature, Land & Food-based Health**

The bills that we believe are most aligned with these principles are listed in [Policy Priorities & Endorsements](#).

## 1. Inclusive & Transparent Governance:

- Involve youth and youth organizers, especially Black, Indigenous, Low-Income, disabled, EJ and otherwise marginalized youth, in all aspects of governance, including the writing, lobbying, amending, and implementing of policy; secure seats for youth (14-18, 18-22, & 22-25 yo) on advisory & governing boards
- Deliver consistent messages to all youth activists and allies; candidly explain when positions have changed
- Write and speak with us through traditional and social media; do not make sweeping or tokenized statements for us about what "youth want/need" or "Black, Indigenous and youth of color want"
- Cosponsor, speak to peers and leadership, report back, and vote in favor of key legislation assertively
- Fight loudly and publicly for rules reform to make committee votes public, to dismantle the hierarchical power of leadership and "behind closed doors" culture of the State House (learn more at [Act on Mass](#))

## 2. Environmental justice (EJ):

- Define, track, and eliminate disproportionate impacts on environmental justice communities, especially air, land, and water pollution, heat stress, flooding, and food and housing insecurity
- Provide housing protections, renovations, mitigation and adaptation projects, especially in EJ communities
- Center wisdom from, follow contracts with, and redistribute resources to Indigenous people and tribes
- Shut down existing and ban future dangerous or polluting energy infrastructure, especially in EJ communities
- Defund oppressive systems (e.g. prisons, police) that create or enforce climate and social justice crises and direct funding toward EJ projects
- Ensure a just transition to a green economy by providing workers accessible, well paid, unionized green jobs

MYCC is dedicated to centering and learning from our Environmental Justice members (e.g. orgs like [Boston Student Advisory Council](#), [Greenroots](#), [Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project](#), [VietAID](#)) and adult-led partners in the EJ Table, the [Green Justice Coalition](#) and [Arise for Social Justice](#). We proactively integrate our climate asks with intersecting social justice movements, including from the MA [Indigenous Legislative Agenda](#), the [Movement for Black Lives](#). We expect legislators to listen to and amplify these voices in all conversations.

## 3. Renewable energy:

- By 2030, reduce economy-wide climate pollution (greenhouse gasses, particulates) by at least 60% (from a 2010 baseline); by 2040, achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions economy-wide and net negative emissions thereafter; all [RPS](#) and emissions caps must align with these targets



- Set interim emissions targets every 5 years with specific and severe financial and legal penalties for government and industry players who do not comply
- Use the [MA Renewable Portfolio Standard \(simpler resource\)](#) as the benchmark for the vast majority (more than 95%) of our energy sources in all sectors
- Vet often greenwashed “solutions” and only use them for 5% of our emissions reductions during the transition; maximize use of technologies and ecosystems that draw down carbon but not as a justification to burn fuels; do not consider biomass incinerators and mega-hydro renewable due to human rights and environmental implications
- Build renewables in EJ communities first in ways directly tied to public health, e.g. reducing the most severe air pollution; do not weaponize or trade the expansion of renewables at the cost of EJ communities

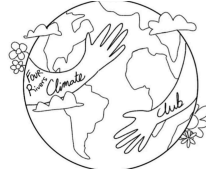


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#### **4. Equitable funding:**

Under capitalism, systems of oppression constantly reinforce and recreate themselves in how and where money flows. MYCC commits to growing an equitable, regenerative economy that consistently and specifically redistributes financial resources and the power associated with them to climate justice projects and the communities most impacted by climate change.



**Where the money should come from:** Wealthy individuals and corporate entities, especially the fossil fuel industry and utility companies that have prolonged and profited off the climate crisis.

#### **How should we get it:**

- Fees, fines, and progressive taxation
- Litigation charging fossil fuel industry for all greenhouse gas emissions and particulates they release into the air and their disinformation campaigns to the public
- Policies that undercut the industries profit motive by forcing them to pay the social cost of carbon, so long as they have rigorous protections for working class people and people employed by the industry

#### **Where it should go:**

- Infrastructure and projects aligned with all the other policy principles that:
  - reduce greenhouse gas and other climate pollutants
  - help communities remediate and heal from the pollution already there
  - foster resilience and adaptation for climate changes that is already here and on the horizon
  - create a just transition with accessible, well paid and benefited jobs
  - serve as reparations to those harmed over generations by slavery, genocide and colonialism, especially African-American and Indigenous descendants
  - received approval directly from representative sets of community members and EJ organizations
- Progressive rebates and tax relief to all low-income individuals, with the understanding that not everyone will directly benefit from particular infrastructure projects. They should be weighted to ensure that the lowest 40% of wage-earners, especially underrepresented, environmental justice, frontline, minority, and rural people, receive more money than they must spend as prices inevitably rise during the renewable transition

#### **5. Intersectional Climate Justice & Civics Education**

- Emphasize how all subjects, especially science, intersect with climate change, its causes, threats and solutions
- Examine how race, class, and other systems of oppression intersect with environmental issues, especially in social studies
- Teach and practice civic engagement—letter writing, op-ed writing, phone banking, coalition-building, lobbying, and rallying—in ways that allow students to explore their own position on issues
- Study historical movement building and how current and local movements strive to create change
- Create interdisciplinary classes that allow students to integrate knowledge and practices from multiple fields to address real world problems like climate change
- Make curricula and assignments that strengthen rather than compete with students’ political engagement
- Build education-to-climate-jobs ladder, especially in voc/trade schools, that teaches youth about fair labor laws and unions and equips them to build a just transition
- Build and renovate school infrastructure that uses, teaches and role-models renewable energy sources, adapt to heat stress, and improve air quality; teach youth about and involve them with sustainable building infrastructure and practices

- Co-create the above solutions with youth by including them in all reform processes, including school boards and other administrative decisions

## **6. Nature, Land & Food-Based Practices:**

- Tend and expand ecosystems that contribute to healthy climate for all by capturing carbon, filtering toxins, buffering floods and erosion and other critical ecosystem services
- Dismantle and replace the anti-indigenous, colonizer aspects of the conservation movement and reintegrate them and their practices with a more nuanced vision of justice informed by long-term residents of land
- Integrate more organic, plant-based and other less harmful nutrition sources into our state food systems in culturally sensitive ways
- Support local farmers and food-systems to minimize harmful impact on workers and the environment and maximize their contributions to climate solutions, e.g. organic farming, polyculture, permaculture
- Transport and distribute healthy food in accessible, affordable ways that eliminate food deserts, combat hunger and ensure food justice for all

*These Policy Principles represent the updated and shared policy position of MYCC, as agreed upon on 11/17/22 by BLS YouthCAN, Fridays for Future MA, Our Climate, MA Climate Education Organization, MA Youth for Climate Justice, Project 9, and Spring Forward MA. To learn more about MYCC, read our [Purpose Statement](#). For specific policies we support, read our [Policy Priorities and Endorsements](#). Reach out to Administrator (Eben Bein, [eben@ourclimate.us](mailto:eben@ourclimate.us), 978.888.8429) or Policy Lead (Hawa Hamidou Tabayi, [hawatabayi@gmail.com](mailto:hawatabayi@gmail.com), 978.751.2773) with any questions.*

## **Adult Allies**



**We also acknowledge the historical contributions of member organizations that are no longer active:**

