



September 23, 2021

City of Milwaukee Common Council  
City Hall Room 205  
200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee WI 53202

Dear members of the City of Milwaukee Common Council:

On July 9, 2019, the Common Council passed a resolution by unanimous vote, recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis and of the impacts of racial and economic inequity, and establishing the City-County Task Force on Climate & Economic Equity to address these issues. Representing our 4,208 members, the Executive Committee of the Great Waters Group—Sierra Club heartily supports the work of the Task Force and urges you to use a portion of the City’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation to fund two important initiatives related to their work.

These initiatives are put forward in the Mayor’s Stronger Summer Plan, Council File 210546:

- \$5 million allocation for **residential energy efficiency**, targeted to households in high energy burden census tracts
- \$2.7 million allocation for the **Century City clean energy jobs program**, including recruitment and outreach, paid apprenticeships, and phase 2 planning for green jobs in manufacturing

The **residential energy efficiency** initiative will empower the City to establish a program addressing the high energy burden borne by Milwaukee’s Black and Latinx families. A [study](#) released on April 8, 2021, by the Sierra Club, North Side Rising Co-op and other partners, found that 85,000 Milwaukeeans live in census tracts where the energy burden is high, at over 6%, with a disproportionate share of them being Black and Latinx households. Average energy burden across metropolitan Milwaukee is 2.8%. The mayor’s proposal on **residential energy efficiency** will target households in the census tracts of high energy burden. Such energy efficiency upgrades are a key strategy for reducing Milwaukee’s greenhouse gas emissions by reducing wasteful energy demand, while at the same time helping financially-stressed households to lower their utility bills.

Likewise, we join the numerous organizations that have written in support of the Employ Milwaukee workforce development project included in the mayor’s plan. In particular, we urge you to support the **Century City clean energy jobs program** as a critical first step toward advancing economic equity through “green jobs”, as called for in the resolution.

Sincerely,

Jenny Abel, Chair, Great Waters Group—Sierra Club