

# OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POLICY FORUM FACT SHEET

May 2021

Communities of color are disproportionately impacted by environmental challenges. In urban communities, people of color are disproportionately impacted by environmental injustice. These communities have a higher likelihood of having unsafe and/or unaffordable drinking water, clean air, and viable and safe land resources, as well as inadequate and/or unaffordable sources of energy. Social, racial, and economic justice are inseparable from environmental justice. We cannot achieve our vision of a Great Lakes enjoyed by all when systemic racism is allowed to permeate our society unchecked.

As we turn toward rebuilding and supporting an equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic,

the year ahead creates a renewed opportunity to build upon the long-term environmental justice work that has been building across the state and to add to its momentum. This brief lays out policy recommendations in the areas of water, land, air, and energy, with the purpose of moving this policy platform forward across the state of Ohio.

These policy recommendations are the product of a virtual environmental justice policy forum held in November 2020. This forum, funded by the Cleveland and Gund Foundations, was designed to provide black and brown leaders working in environmentally focused careers with opportunities to network while developing a state-level policy agenda and a vision for an environmentally just Ohio.





# Ohio Environmental Justice Policy Forum Policy Recommendations

## WATER

- Ban residential water shutoffs due to nonpayment.
- Increase funding for lead service line replacement and grants for homeowners seeking to remove sources of lead from their home water systems.
- Ban partial lead service line replacement.
- Ensure all water utilities and local governments implement 20-year lead service line replacement plans.
- Create a racially and geographically diverse citizens advisory board to weigh in on H2Ohio implementation and other water issues.

## LAND

- Amend the Clean Ohio Fund to allow municipalities and conservation funds to receive state funds for land acquisition and active park creation.
- Fund the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund: Dedicating the revenue Ohio receives in liquor profits each year would provide over \$40 million per year in funding that is flexible, sustainable, and complementary to existing environmental remediation programs.
- Increase state funding for growing a clean and efficient manufacturing sector, including for the purposes of industrial efficiency, repurposing industrial areas into eco-industrial parks, and growing the local supply chain for the environmentally and socially responsible products of the future.

## AIR

- Invest in and incentivize low- and zero-emission cars, buses, and trucks.
- Impose progressively stringent penalties and fines on industrial businesses responsible for air pollution violations.
- Improve indoor air quality, reduce energy bills, and increase the comfort of homes through reintroduction of state energy efficiency standards, with a special focus on historically redlined, dense, and low-income communities that tend to endure higher energy burdens.

## ENERGY

- Create net metering policies that encourage homeowners and business owners to invest in localized electric generation and/or storage capacity.
- Reinstate the renewable energy portfolio standard (RPS) and energy efficiency resource standard.
- Though home rule inhibits state authority over implementation of local hiring provisions, we encourage state lawmakers to support policies that increase training and set-asides for disadvantaged business enterprises.
- Repeal HB 6 and introduce statewide comprehensive energy policies that provide incentives and allow for the production and development of clean energy and jobs.