



The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) is pleased to submit this report, “Putting California on the High Road: A Jobs and Climate Action Plan for 2030,” to the Legislature pursuant to Assembly Bill 398 (E. Garcia, Chapter 135, Statutes of 2017).

Prepared by the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education, the report offers the State of California a vision for integrating economic and workforce development into major climate policies and programs in order to help achieve California’s major climate goals: achieving 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and transitioning to a carbon neutral economy by 2045. With chapters corresponding to each of the six sectors of the 2017 Climate Scoping Plan, the report responds to the direction in AB 398, focusing on job quality and social equity concerns in assessing the impacts of climate measures on employment and training. It also emphasizes strategies to ensure disadvantaged communities and workers are involved in creating, and benefitting from, the economic gains generated by the work required to stabilize the climate.

In mandating this report, the Legislature understood that the state’s massive climate investments represent a significant opportunity for inclusive economic growth – and also that, without a thoughtful approach, this transition could become a missed opportunity, leaving many communities and workers behind. This report create a framework for maximizing the positive labor market outcomes of our climate investments: to simultaneously advance equity and mobility for Californians, while delivering skills and competitiveness for California employers.

In our view, there are three key messages policymakers and other readers should take from this report:

- First, labor should be considered an investment rather than a cost – and investments in growing, diversifying, and upskilling California’s workforce can positively affect returns on climate mitigation efforts. In other words, well trained workers are key to delivering emissions reductions and moving California closer to its climate targets.
- Second, California can achieve greater social equity in labor market outcomes for disadvantaged workers and communities when policymakers pay attention to job quality. Identifying high-quality careers (i.e., ones that offer family-supporting wages, employer-provided benefits, worker voice, and opportunities for advancement)



first, and then building pathways up and into such careers, is critical to ensuring that investments in workforce education and training meaningfully improve workers' economic mobility.

- Lastly, deliberate policy interventions are necessary in order to advance job quality and social equity as California transitions to a carbon neutral economy, just as such efforts are required to reduce pollution, protect human and environmental health, and to safeguard communities from an already-changing climate.

This report provides insights into these climate and workforce issues and makes recommendations for simultaneously promoting equity and mobility for workers, skills and competitiveness for employers and industry, and long-term environmental sustainability and climate resilience for the state – i.e., a roadmap for putting California's workforce development and climate action plans on the high road.

In approaching the report, it is important to clarify that though commissioned and reviewed carefully by CWDB, this report is ultimately the work of the UC Berkeley Labor Center. It is also a point-in-time document that was undertaken primarily in 2018 based on the available literature and information when it was written.

In addition to the report authors, CWDB would like to thank the many organizations and individuals that participated in meetings held in the summer of 2018 that helped inform the recommendations in the report. We also owe a debt of gratitude to the many organizations that have pioneered and demonstrated the viability of high-road workforce development in climate-related industries. This report would not be possible without their tireless efforts and the sharing of lessons learned.



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