

Fact Sheet

Civilian Climate Corps Acts

S.1244/H.R.2670 & S.487/H.R.1162



Farm Action Fund



Farm Action

Two landmark bills have been introduced to establish a new, revised Civilian Conservation Corps for our times: the Civilian Climate Corps for Jobs and Justice Act, introduced by Senator Edward Markey (D-MA) and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14), and the 21st Century Conservation Corps Act of 2021, introduced by Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Representative Joe Neguse (D-CO-2).

Implementing provisions from both Acts will yield resoundingly positive benefits for rural communities and agricultural systems, and advance a more inclusive economy for all Americans.

BACKGROUND

In the 1930s, the original Civilian Conservation Corps created economic opportunity and achieved successful, widespread conservation initiatives at a critical time for the nation. However, the program's opportunities were largely unavailable to marginalized groups, and few of the program benefits extended to their communities.

Today, our nation faces another critical moment, and any conservation corps we establish should do more than work on public lands: such a program should achieve broad agricultural and climate resiliency while confronting the harms of the past.



Both the Civilian Climate Corps for Jobs and Justice Act and the 21st Century Conservation Corps Act of 2021 would address the program's history of discrimination by creating economic opportunity for rural and BIPOC communities, and broaden the scope of Corps activities to benefit the food system and the environment.

FARM ACTION RECOMMENDS PROVISIONS FROM BOTH PROPOSED BILLS.

The recommended provisions from the Civilian Climate Corps for Jobs and Justice Act and the 21st Century Conservation Corps Act of 2021 will benefit farmers, ranchers, rural communities, BIPOC communities, and all those who eat.

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CIVILIAN CLIMATE CORPS FOR JOBS AND JUSTICE ACT: KEY PROVISIONS

Appropriates \$122,500,000,000 to establish a Civilian Climate Corps.

Project Priorities: 1.5 million Americans over 5 years will complete federally-funded projects to help communities respond to climate change and transition to a clean economy. Projects include:

- Installing clean energy infrastructure in homes and small businesses, on farms, and in communities
- Expanding broadband access and adoption
- Creating and expanding local and regional food systems
- Developing farm-to-institution distribution models to make schools, hospitals, and other institutions healthier and more food-resilient, with priority for "Buy American" products

Career Development:

- Vocational training appropriate to the local job market
- Guaranteed follow-up services help track corps members' career progress
- Requires coordination with local labor unions

Salary and Benefits:

- Compensation of at least \$15 per hour, full health care coverage, and support services such as transportation, housing, and childcare

Education:

- Educational grants of \$25,000 per year of service up to \$50,000; may be used for further education or to pay down student debt

Equity:

- Tribal communities will receive 10% of the dedicated environmental justice benefits
- At least 50% of projects to benefit historically marginalized communities; 50% of corps members recruited from those same communities, with no age limit in at least 50% of Partner Corps

21ST CENTURY CONSERVATION CORPS ACT OF 2021: KEY PROVISIONS

Appropriates \$17,525,000,000 to establish a Civilian Corps, and an additional \$5,500,000,000 to implement a comprehensive and effective list of climate stewardship practices.

Project Priorities: Widespread adoption of climate stewardship practices will be achieved through voluntary incentives for private farm and forest lands. This bill also establishes far-reaching Civilian Conservation Corps projects targeting conservation, resource management, and disaster relief.

Establishes Corps Service Projects in the Following Agencies:

- National Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Grants distributed through the National Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program will allow for high-impact resiliency projects that will restore watersheds with:
 - Quantifiable reductions to pollution that cannot be traced to a particular source
 - Quantified increases in streamflow that benefit native fish and wildlife species
 - Quantified streamflow preference to account for recreational usage

Education, Work Experience, and Workforce Investment – Corps Members Will:

- Learn the foundations of Federal public land recreation management and stewardship
- Learn the principles of sustainable outdoor recreation and resource management
- Experience recreation and resource management job-specific occupational skills
- Be prepared for their work with the qualified youth or conservation corps
- Be prepared for careers relating to conservation, outdoor recreation, and other environmental industries after serving in the qualified youth or conservation corps



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