

POWER UP AMERICA



It's time to Power Up, West Virginia

West Virginia has long been a model for good-paying manufacturing jobs and industrial innovation in our country.

As the new administration and Congress consider how to contain the coronavirus, get our economy back on track and address inequality, they have a chance to make some big changes.

We can create good-paying jobs in West Virginia while addressing the nation's biggest sources of air and water pollution. We can power up the economy and make our air safer to breathe by building clean trucks, buses, cars and clean energy.



Investing in clean power and a newer, cleaner transportation system will build up our manufacturing base, make American businesses more competitive, and save thousands of lives lost prematurely every year as a result of respiratory and cardiovascular complications from car and truck pollution on our roads and highways. With concerted outreach and coordination, cleaning up these sectors has the potential to bring significant public health benefits to communities where the burden of pollution falls heaviest.

We're seeing momentum toward diversification of West Virginia's energy and business portfolio:

- Wind energy is growing in West Virginia. The state currently has six separate wind generation facilities with a total capacity of 766.5 megawatts. Additionally, three new facilities have been approved by the Public Service Commission and are currently under construction.
- Solar is also on the rise. The [Raleigh Solar Farm](#) in Raleigh County, which is currently under development, will generate electricity for 16,000 homes, garner \$200,000 annual tax revenue and will provide approximately \$7 million in local economic activity.
- The West Virginia legislature [passed a utility solar energy program](#) that permits the state's two electric utilities, FirstEnergy and American Electric Power, to install up to 200 megawatts of solar. If fully enacted, this would increase the state's solar capacity by 600% and could power over 30,000 homes.
- Toyota's plant in Buffalo, WV, will be home to the [state's largest solar project](#) and span 6 acres and generate 2.6 megawatts of solar-generated energy. This is part of the company's strategy to reduce its reliance on outside energy needed for operations.
- Organizations, including the [Coalfield Development Corporation](#), are working to foster social, environmental, and financial resiliency in Appalachian communities through job training and workforce development programs.

Manufacturing clean vehicles also has the potential to expand and protect West Virginia's economy, infrastructure, and health. Manufacturing employed [47,000](#) West Virginians as of 2018, and accounted for 10% of the state's output. The production of vehicles and parts is currently West Virginia's second largest manufacturing sector, and is poised to expand with common-sense policies.

Diversifying West Virginia's economy will create jobs and build up the state's manufacturing base. But we need Congress to make investments and enact policies to help transition working families to new, good-paying jobs and invest in our communities.