

An Open Letter to America's CEOs

March 1, 2021

Our nation faces urgent and interconnected challenges including ending the global pandemic, rebuilding the economy, pursuing racial justice and confronting the climate crisis. As business leaders, you have a historic opportunity and responsibility to act.

The need for private-sector leadership to address climate change has never been greater. With a new administration and Congress in place, there is an immediate window to enact public policy that puts the United States on a path to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, restores our standing as a global leader on climate and spurs economic recovery and job creation — all in an equitable, just and inclusive manner.

It is encouraging to see so many companies set ambitious goals to reduce their own emissions. While such commitments are important, public policy is essential to deliver emission reductions at the speed and scale needed to limit the worst impacts of climate change.

That's why business leadership on climate change must include policy leadership.

To those companies that have taken action to support climate policy, we commend you and ask you to redouble your efforts. To the rest, now is the time to step up.

We call on all businesses to adopt a science-based climate advocacy agenda aligned with the ambition to limit average global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

To be on a path to that target, the United States must achieve net zero GHG emissions — emitting no more climate pollution than we can remove from the atmosphere — no later than 2050 and cut emissions at least 50% below 2005 levels by 2030.

To rise to this challenge, we ask you to start taking action today to:

1. Publicly support an ambitious 2030 goal (Nationally Determined Contribution) for the United States under the Paris Agreement.
2. Advocate for legislation and regulations to cut climate pollution on a path to net zero by 2050.
3. Align your trade associations' lobbying with a path to net zero by 2050, and act promptly to address any misalignment, including withholding dues if necessary.
4. Allocate your spending on lobbying and other channels of political influence in ways that advance, and do not obstruct, a path to net zero by 2050.
5. Use every opportunity — in the media, before Congress, and with your peers — to publicly support policies that put the United States on a path to net zero by 2050.

Now is the time to secure meaningful climate policy, and business leadership is vital to meet this moment. Visit www.aaacclimateleadership.org to learn more, and please let any one of us know how we can help.

Signed,



Aron Cramer
BSR



Bob Perciasepe
C2ES



Ateli Iyalla
CDP



Mindy Lubber
Ceres



Amy Davidsen
Climate Group, North America



M. Sanjayan
Conservation International



Fred Krupp
Environmental Defense Fund



Jennifer Morris
The Nature Conservancy



Kathleen Rest
Union of Concerned Scientists



Maria Mendiluce
We Mean Business



Andrew Steer
World Resources Institute



Carter Roberts
World Wildlife Fund