

New report shows how Ontario's plan to retrofit buildings and fight climate change can create over 30,000 good green jobs.

Report lays out recommendations to ensure that the jobs created are good jobs that go to those who need them most.

BLUE GREEN CANADA, CLEAN ECONOMY ALLIANCE and ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE

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Toronto, ON - As Ontario is set to make historic investments into improving the energy efficiency of buildings across the province to combat climate change, a new report from Environmental Defence, Blue Green Canada and the Clean Economy Alliance titled *Building an Ontario Green Jobs Strategy*, urges the province to ensure that Ontario's plan to meet its goals in reducing greenhouse gas emissions also works to alleviate social and economic inequity by creating jobs for people in need.

New analysis in the report shows that Ontario's investment of \$1.91 billion to \$2.73 billion in retooling buildings, as outlined in the Climate Change Action Plan, could create between 24,500 to 32,900 green jobs over the five-year funding plan. In addition, a further 16,800 to 24,000 jobs could be created from the reinvestments of energy cost savings into the economy.

"Ontario now has the opportunity to make sure that these jobs are good jobs, that pay a living wage, offer benefits, and are accessible to people who have faced barriers to employment," says Keith Brooks, Programs Director at Environmental Defence. "The investment in buildings will create jobs. That's a given. But it won't necessarily create good jobs and be part of the plan for more inclusive growth unless the province commits to that goal."

Building an Ontario Green Jobs Strategy provides eight key recommendations to ensure that the jobs created by retrofitting Ontario buildings to increase their energy efficiency will provide pathways to decent careers for people who face barriers to employment or are otherwise disadvantaged and need decent jobs the most. The recommendations include conducting a census to understand which current jobs are vulnerable to the transition to a low-carbon economy, and which skills are needed for new jobs that will help lower greenhouse gas emissions in Ontario's buildings.

"The Ontario government has an opportunity to link increasing energy efficiency of buildings with creating good jobs and career opportunities for people with employment barriers," said Mark Rowlinson, Assistant to the National Director of the United Steelworkers and President of Blue Green Canada. "The province should take this opportunity, and ensure that the investments into fighting climate change also help lift people out of poverty, address the increasing precarious nature of work, and tackle other social and economic inequities."

Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan allocates some funding towards worker training and skills development. The report urges that this funding is allocated to maximize career opportunities for workers who can benefit most from the skills training.

“With rapid advancement in building systems and control technologies, we are hopeful that a fair portion of the funds raised through the province’s cap-and-trade program will be reinvested in advanced training and job creation in the building sector to meet the needs of commercial real estate industry and Ontario’s public buildings to increase efficiency and performance,” says Bala Gnanam, Director of Sustainable Building Operations & Strategic Partnerships at The Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) Toronto - a commercial real estate industry association that represent over 80 per cent of Toronto and the GTA’s building owners, and a Clean Economy Alliance member.

“Energy efficiency through deep energy retrofits to existing homes and buildings will lead to positive economy-wide impacts on employment,” says Jay Nordenstrom Executive Director of the North American Insulation Manufacturers Association, another member of the Clean Economy Alliance. “These retrofits also reduce energy waste, save money and create more comfortable and healthy environments to live, work and play in. A significant proportion of manufactured products that contribute to deep energy retrofits, including insulation, are made and installed right here in Ontario. It’s a win-win-win for Ontarians.”

About ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE (environmentaldefence.ca): Environmental Defence is Canada’s most effective environmental action organization. We challenge, and inspire change in government, business and people to ensure a greener, healthier and prosperous life for all.

About BLUE GREEN CANADA (bluegreencanada.ca) Blue Green Canada is an alliance between Canadian labour unions, environmental and civil society organizations to advocate for working people and the environment by promoting solutions to environmental issues that have positive employment and economic impacts.

About The CLEAN ECONOMY ALLIANCE (CEA): The CEA is a group of over 100 organizations representing a broad cross-section of Ontarians that united in 2015 to urge Ontario to show leadership in addressing the crucial issue of climate change. The CEA includes prominent Ontario businesses, industry associations, labour unions, farmers’ groups, health advocates, and environmental organizations. The Alliance supports the Ontario government’s commitments to develop and implement a climate change strategy and cap-and-trade program. Its members recognize that reducing greenhouse gas emissions will bring many benefits, including cleaner air, improved public health, and more jobs and business opportunities in the clean economy. For a full list of Clean Economy Alliance members, please visit cleaneconomyalliance.ca.

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