

Presidential Candidates' Energy and Climate Crisis Platforms

A look into the top 3
frontrunners in the presidential
race: Joe Biden, Elizabeth
Warren, and Bernie Sanders

2020 U.S. Presidential Elections





There are 19 Democrats running for president.

Most of them have declared that addressing climate change is important.

Who should I support?

Joe Biden



\$1.7 trillion
direct federal
investment



10 million jobs
in the clean energy
economy



10 years
to achieve spending
targets

- Current Democratic front-runner
- Most moderate stance on climate change out of the three candidates
- Has called for a Green New Deal (GND)
- Climate platform
 - 5 policy objectives for climate action
 - Plan includes environmental justice language
 - Energy agenda leaves room for fossil fuels
 - Does not propose ban on fracking
- Policy agenda addresses 26 out of 48 components of the GND and acknowledges 9 components

The Biden Proposal

Five policy objectives for climate action in line with 100% clean energy economy by 2050

1. Ensure the U.S. achieves a 100% clean energy economy and reaches net-zero emissions no later than 2050
2. Build a stronger, more resilient nation
3. Rally the rest of the world to meet the threat of climate change
4. Stand up to the abuse of power by polluters who disproportionately harm communities of color and low-income communities
5. Fulfill our obligation to workers and communities who powered our industrial revolution and subsequent decades of economic growth

However...

Biden pledged not to take money from fossil fuel executives.

However, the next day after attending CNN's climate town hall last month, he went to a big-ticket fundraiser hosted by Andrew Goldman, one of his former advisers and co-founder of Western LNG ("liquified natural gas," which is a fossil fuel). Attendees of the fundraiser were asked to contribute \$2,800 to his campaign.

Biden's team states that Goldman is not involved in the firm's day-to-day operations and therefore isn't a "fossil fuel executive." Activists say that Biden's making a false distinction.

Biden's Senior Adviser vs Law Professor



Symone D. Sanders ✓

@SymoneDSanders

Follow

What [@andersoncooper](#) just said about VP Biden's fundraiser is factually incorrect. Andrew Goldman isn't a fossil fuel executive. He's not involved in the day to day operation. He's not on the board of the company, nor the board of the portfolio company.

5:16 PM - 4 Sep 2019

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Symone D. Sanders ✓ @SymoneDSanders · Sep 4

VP Biden signed a pledge not to take money from fossil fuel executives. He stands by it, and he has not violated it.

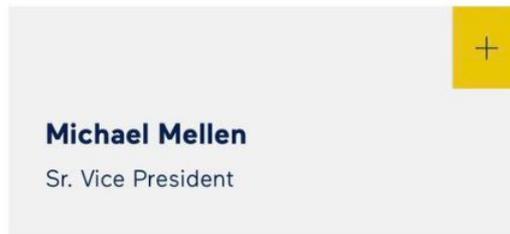
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Jennifer Taub ✓ @jentaub · Sep 4

Replying to [@SymoneDSanders](#) [@andersoncooper](#)

Don't let this be the hill Biden's campaign dies on. Goldman is listed in the leadership team. Even if he does not possess an official title, he sends this message to the public. This kind of parsing makes his campaign seem untrustworthy. Do better please



14 36 351

Elizabeth Warren



\$3 trillion
direct federal
investment



1 million jobs
created by Green
Manufacturing Plan



10 years
to achieve spending
and jobs targets

- Second Democratic frontrunner
- Has called for a Green New Deal (GND)
- Climate platform
 - Package of 8 plans
 - Strong labor protections, antitrust safeguards against corporate overreach, and recognition of indigenous sovereignty
 - Sets specific targets for decarbonization of transportation, buildings, and electric sectors
- Policy agenda addresses 34 out of 48 components of the GND and acknowledges 6 components

The Warren Proposal

I will primarily focus on the Clean Energy plan out of the 8 total climate plans.

CLIMATE PLANS

Green Manufacturing >

Clean Energy >

Environmental Justice >

Sustainable Agriculture >

Improving Trade >

Clean Air and Water >

Fighting Corruption >

Green Infrastructure >

Protecting Public Lands >

International Standards >

Tribal Lands >

Warren's Plan: 100% Clean Energy for America

- By 2028, 100% zero-carbon pollution for all new commercial and residential buildings.
- By 2030, 100% zero emissions for all new light-duty passenger vehicles, medium-duty trucks, and all buses.
- By 2035, 100% renewable and zero-emission energy in electricity generation, with an interim target of 100% carbon-neutral power by 2030.

Warren's Plan: 100% Clean Energy for America

- 10-year plan to achieve 100% clean energy by decarbonizing electricity, vehicles, and buildings, which are responsible for 70% of all U.S. carbon emissions
- **Green Apollo Plan:** invest \$400 billion over 10 years in clean energy R&D
- **Green Manufacturing Plan:** invest \$1.5 trillion over 10 years in federal procurement of American-made clean energy products to fund the transition
- **Plan for Public Lands:** generate 10% of overall electricity needs from renewable sources offshore or on public lands
- **Green Marshall Plan:** commit \$100 billion to support export of American-made clean energy products

Bernie Sanders



\$16.3 trillion
direct federal
investment



20 million jobs



10 years
to achieve spending
targets

- Third Democratic front-runner
- Most progressive climate platform
- Has called for a Green New Deal (GND)
- Bernie's Green New Deal
 - Aims to fundamentally restructure federal government's relationship with the energy system
 - Justice-centric approach
 - Commits to full decarbonization of electric and transportation sectors by 2030
- Policy agenda addresses 44 out of 48 components of the GND and acknowledges 2 components

The Green New Deal

The climate crisis is not only the single greatest challenge facing our country; it is also our single greatest opportunity to build a more just and equitable future, but we must act immediately.



Bernie

Platform: “Achieve 100% sustainable energy for electricity and transportation by no later than 2030 and to fully decarbonize the economy by 2050 at the latest.”

Bernie's Green New Deal

- End unemployment by creating 20 million jobs needed to solve the climate crisis
- End greed in energy system
- Spend \$526 billion to build a modern smart grid
- Weatherize homes and businesses to perform energy efficiency upgrades to make buildings more energy efficient and lower energy bills
- Phase out the use of non-sustainable sources (no nuclear, geoengineering, carbon capture and sequestration, or trash incinerators)
- Regulate all dangerous greenhouse gases
- Declare a climate emergency

My Thoughts

While Biden is the current Democratic frontrunner, his climate plan is not as comprehensive or ambitious as Warren or Sanders'. I was disappointed by his plan leaving room for fossil fuels and his attending the fundraiser by the held by the "fossil fuel executive."

Warren and Sanders' climate plans look quite similar, although I appreciate Sanders' plan the most due to its justice-centric approach and overall thoroughness. The difference between the two lies in their political ideology and how they view politics: Warren supports capitalism, while Sanders calls for a political revolution and believes that capitalism is unstable and unjust.

My Vote



I have still not decided on a single candidate to support. I will most likely support Warren or Sanders over Biden. Who I support is subject to change depending on the rest of their stances on other critical issues, as well as who is most likely to win and unite our country. Anybody is better than our current president.

I plan to continue monitoring these candidates up until the primaries. It was daunting to read through all three candidates' plans because it had so much verbiage. I want to read and hear analysis of the plans and of the candidates by established experts.

My vote will go to the candidate whose plan is both ambitious and realistic. Right now, that's still hard to see.

Celine Yang's Green New Deal

If I were running for President...

CELINE YANG 2020

**AMERICA, IT'S TIME
FOR A JUST
TRANSITION TO A
REGENERATIVE
ECONOMY.**

**WE WILL PHASE OUT
FOSSIL FUELS, INVEST
IN TRULY RENEWABLE
ENERGY SOURCES, AND
CREATE MILLIONS OF
JOBS IN THE PROCESS.**

**WE MUST CREATE
ACTION PLANS TO
TAKE US TO 100%
DECARBONIZATION.**

**I realize my voice is
one voice out of the
millions in America.**

I will convene a Council
including all voices,
backgrounds, and expertise to
help write a realistic, attainable,
and ambitious Green New Deal
for America.

CELINE YANG 2020



1. By 2030, we will achieve 100% renewable energy for electric and transportation sectors. By 2050, we will fully decarbonize the economy.
2. We will create 20 million good-paying, union jobs to fuel this transition.
3. We will invest trillions into funding clean energy R&D, procuring 100% American-made clean energy products, and exporting American-made clean energy products.

Action Plans

4-year, 10-year, and 20-year
climate action plans

We must develop multiple action plans. After all, one president's term is usually four years and rarely longer than eight years. We must get as much done as possible in one term, as well as set our sights on the long-term vision for America.
