

Rapidly transitioning to a 100% clean energy economy is critical to tackling the climate crisis, and state and local lawmakers have a significant role to play in ensuring an equitable and expedient transition. State and local policies can accelerate clean energy adoption, and being well versed in the basics will help climate champs be more effective on the campaign trail.¹

Clean Energy

- Clean energy is energy that comes from renewable, zero emission sources that do not pollute the atmosphere when used.² Expanding wind and solar energy is the primary focus of the clean energy transition, as these solutions are by far the cheapest and can be scaled up most quickly.³ Clean energy is the biggest job creator across America's energy sector.⁴

Solar Energy

- Solar power is energy from the sun that is converted into thermal or electrical energy, and it is the cleanest and most abundant clean energy source available.⁵ Solar technologies can harness this energy for a variety of uses, including generating electricity.⁶ Solar is deployed at [rooftop](#), [commercial](#), and [utility-scale](#) levels, each with its own benefits and considerations.

Wind Energy

- Wind energy is the use of wind turbines to generate electricity.⁷ Wind energy is primarily made up of onshore v.s. offshore wind. Onshore wind is generated by wind turbines located on land driven by the natural movement of air.⁸ Offshore wind is generated by wind turbines in bodies of water, usually at sea. There are higher wind speeds offshore than on land, so offshore farms generate more electricity per amount of capacity installed.⁹

Energy Efficiency

- Energy Efficiency is the use of less energy to perform the same task or produce the same result, and is a critical component to the clean energy transition.¹⁰ Energy efficiency interventions can be made both at the utility and at the consumer end-use levels. Smart and efficient electricity use facilitates faster decarbonization of the power sector and supports the integration of clean energy technologies.¹¹ After all, the cleanest source of energy is the energy not used at all.

Citations

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