



COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis

February 20, 2024

Denver Regional Council of Governments
1001 17th Street, Suite 700
Denver, CO 80202

RE: Letter of Support for Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant (CPRG) -
Decarbonize DRCOG Proposal

The State of Colorado offers its full support for the Denver Regional Council of Government's "Decarbonize DRCOG" grant proposed to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program.

My administration has made bold climate action benefitting all Coloradans a core priority over the course of my first and second term as Governor. I spend every day working with my team to ensure Colorado leads the country to achieve our shared climate and clean energy goals. In my first campaign in 2018 I set out a vision to achieve 100% renewable energy for Colorado by 2040. In 2019, I signed legislation that set science-based greenhouse gas pollution reduction targets and, in response, my Administration put together our first Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap. Released in January 2021, this document set out an all-of-government approach to reducing emissions, while saving people money on energy and transportation, improving air quality, and driving new investments and jobs in Colorado's clean energy economy.

In three short years we've made enormous progress. Nationally Colorado is 5th in the market share of electric vehicles, 12th in installed solar capacity, and 7th in installed wind capacity. We have moved incredibly fast in the electric power sector. When I began my first term of Governor in 2019, roughly 42% of our electricity was produced using coal. In 2022, renewable energy accounted for 37% of the State's total electricity. By 2031 we will close our last coal fired power plant, replaced by low cost wind and solar energy and battery storage. By 2029 we will exceed 80% renewable energy on our grid. To support this incredibly fast technological and economic transition, Colorado opened the nation's first Office of Just Transition – putting tens of millions of dollars to work to diversify the economic base of coal-dependent communities and expanding job opportunities for coal workers.

Climate action is not merely a matter of numbers and goals; what matters is that we set up Colorado's economy, workforce, and way of life to survive and thrive in the 21st century. We are already feeling the impacts of climate change, and yet the solutions are not only achievable but affordable. Every choice we make in this Roadmap, and the previous, rely on a vision that makes the experience of living in Colorado more sustainable, affordable, and resilient.

As I laid out in my administration's first Roadmap: we need climate action that saves people money by reducing our energy consumption and reliance on fossil fuels; reduces emissions and saves people money by providing more housing close to jobs and downtowns; grows new clean energy jobs for Colorado; curtails pollution and improves public health; assists communities and workers dependent on traditional fossil-fuel industries to transition effectively; and ensures environmental justice communities- and all Colorado communities- are beneficiaries of our efforts. But our success depends on collaboration. Colorado is bringing a "whole-of-government" approach to climate action; new state and federal resources require collaboration for a "whole-of-society" approach.

That is why our partnership with DRCOG and this application is so important. We will only succeed on our climate goals as a state in partnership with local governments, and we welcome DRCOG's collaboration in reducing emissions. The state has numerous incentives and policies to support GHG reductions from the buildings sector in progress, and we anticipate close collaboration to ensure our efforts are synergistic.

One example is for buildings. DRCOG's approach is systemic, looking at upstream, midstream, and downstream policy implementation and incentive levers to drive market transformation and improve accessibility and the customer experience of adopting new, lower carbon building technologies. It also focuses deeply on workforce development - a major priority for my legislative agenda statewide this year as well - and together we can unlock this market including zero-emission energy codes and building performance standards.

The proposal is comprehensive and transformative, and strongly complements the State's efforts to drive building sector decarbonization statewide. It not only targets equitable building electrification but also ensures a focus on Justice40 principles, prioritizing benefits for low-income and disadvantaged communities and will help bring our entire region along in advancing our climate justice and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

We look forward to contributing our expertise, tools, and resources to support the success of this groundbreaking initiative.

Should you have any inquiries regarding our support for this funding application, please feel free to contact Dominique Gomez of the Colorado Energy Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jared Polis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jared" and last name "Polis" clearly distinguishable.

Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado