

Just and Equitable Green Economy Transition

By Ben Jealous

“What good is a dollar an hour more in wages if your neighborhood is burning down? What good is another week’s vacation if the lake you used to go to is polluted and you can’t swim in it and the kids can’t play in it?”

Those were questions posed by legendary labor leader Walter Reuther. Reuther was the president of the United Auto Workers union (UAW) during the first Earth Day in 1970. UAW not only wrote the first check in support of Earth Day, it also contributed mightily to the national organizing effort for the inaugural holiday we still celebrate today.

On Earth Day 1993, I gave my first major speech, on behalf of the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC). It was at rally opposing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The experience taught me firsthand how the movements to protect our planet and the rights of working people are tightly linked.

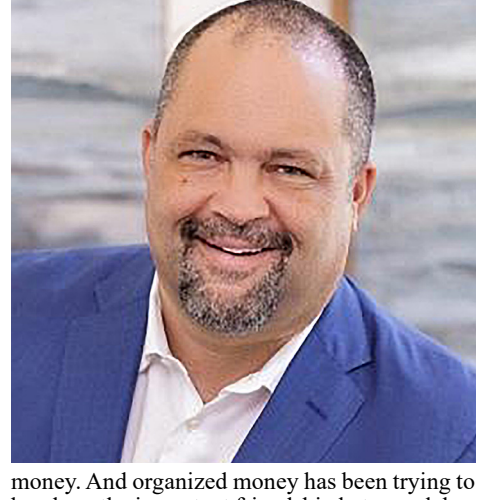
We just celebrated Labor Day in what is projected to be the hottest year on record. It is a great

time to celebrate the relationship between labor and the environmental movement. And a time to remember we have the tools to make sure the transition to a clean energy economy does not leave workers behind.

A just transition means creating good green jobs and protecting workers’ rights. It means ensuring workers have a center seat at the table when discussing climate policy. It means providing workers the training and support they need to ensure they are ready to work in emerging green industries and making sure they are taken care of in the meantime. And it means investing in the communities directly impacted by the transition.

Last year, Michigan provided the nation with a template for how to get this done. The state’s Clean Energy and Jobs Package is a bold effort to aggressively reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support a rapid transition to clean energy by making sure workers in the automobile, energy, and other sectors benefit.

In our many overlapping movements for progress and justice, it almost always comes down to a battle between organized people and organized



money. And organized money has been trying to break up the important friendship between labor and environmentalists for a long time.

We saw this during the debate on Michigan’s historic climate and jobs legislation. Environmental

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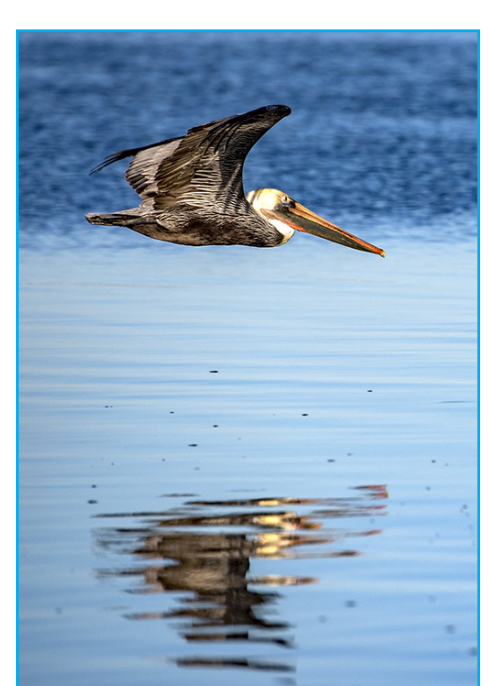
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Selling to the Federal Government Webinar
Thursday, September 12, 2024, 12:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
Did you know that the federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world? Interested in learning how your business can market your services or goods to the federal government? Register on line at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-sell-to-the-federal-government-tickets-21790713611> SBA helps to ensure small businesses get fair opportunities to share federal government prime contracts. Topics will include: How to Register, Small Business Certifications, Finding Opportunities, Marketing Your Firm, Federal Supply Schedules, Getting Paid, Tips to Prepare Your Offer, How to Seek Additional Assistance. All training sessions are held via Microsoft Teams Meeting. Participants must ensure Microsoft Teams is functioning.

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program Webinar
Tuesday, September 17, 2024, 1:00 pm–2:30 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Patrice Dozier, patrice.dozier@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
Welcome to the WOSB webinar series! Are

you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government’s goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA’s Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions will include an overview of the self-certification process, as well as a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register for this free webinar at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/woman-owned-small-business-wosb-program-tickets-817459181417>

8(a) Orientation and SAM Registration Webinar
Wednesday, September 18, 2024, 9:30 am–10:30 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
Join the Small Business Administration (SBA) Illinois District Office for a virtual workshop providing an overview of the 8(a) Business Development program, eligibility requirements, and program benefits. Also learn how to increase your potential for federal contract opportunities through System for Award Management (SAM) registration, including information that you need for the registration process. SBA presenters will offer additional tips, address FAQs, give directions on where to get further assistance, and answer your other questions. To register for this free webinar, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/8a-orientation-sam-registration-tickets-518989961947>

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