

---

## The Green New Deal As A Disaster For America

The climate crisis is hitting the world like never before. In recent years, the United States has experienced an increase of effects caused by climate change, leaving its catastrophic damages behind in its path. According to the United Nations, there is just over a decade remaining before any climate damage becomes irreversible (Wagner and Samaras, par. 2). Something must be done, sooner rather than later, to fight this alarming piece, and the Green New Deal (GND) currently seems to be the only option. Inspired to do something, New York congresswoman, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, proposed her version of a GND that she believes is the only hope for the U.S. In her GND, she calls for drastic measures to cut carbon emissions across the nation with aims of simultaneously boosting the economy and the number of job opportunities. It focuses on groups such as poor, disabled minority communities who are less fortunate and are most likely to be more affected than others. While the GND seems like the ideal resolution, it is, in fact, going against what it is calling for. The transition to renewable energy in following years would be crippling as taxpayer costs would exceed while “displacing some 10 million Americans in high-paying oil and gas industries from their jobs,” opposing what the GND calls for in order to make a change in our climate crisis (Moore, par. 4). The climate crisis is a battle that must be fought now, not in future years, and it can not be simply resolved with an underdeveloped proposal. Alternatively, Americans should consider other options available as the resolution contains possible insufficiencies.

In the long run, the GND may work. Ideally, if the GND was adopted, the utilization of resources would allow for a cleaner and safer environment, resolving the climate crisis. If the resolution were to be revised and elaborated on with specifics to their goals, it would be more effective than the way it was initially proposed. However, this is not the reality of the situation. One of the main issues with the resolution is the cost to transform from fossil fuels to renewable sources. The GND has an alarming estimated price tag between \$51 and \$93 trillion (Siegel, par. 2). A goal composing the GND is to solve social inequality as the nation simultaneously battles the climate crisis. For this to be possible, reasonable and achievable policies must be created. The resolution calls for “eliminating virtually all fossil fuels” (Haskins, par. 9) to make such a transition to 100% renewable energy in the future. Such intentions need to be reevaluated as “renewable energy sources... are two to five times more expensive” delaying the process of an economy boost. With the ratification, the economy would experience a devastation as manufacturers and industries must remove any pollutants and greenhouse emissions. By doing so, costs would rise and those of low-income communities, specifically those who live paycheck to paycheck would struggle to cover the increased prices.

Following the idea that the GND will be an economic disaster for America, the nation is impotent to resolve anything without putting reasonable and assertive policies towards solving climate change. With fossil fuels devastating the nation, renewable resources are seen as cleaner, yet, this has been misconceived. Justin Haskins, an executive editor and research fellow at The Heartland Institute, reveals the creation of new solar panels, wind turbines, and buildings that require the mining of steel and earth minerals, particular factors that further worsen climate change (par. 19). The ambition to get away from climate change is vigorous but possible. Having said that, this demonstrates renewable sources still lead to consequential environmental issues despite being conceived to be safer. Democrats in favor of the resolution put confidence

---

in these renewable sources to attain the transition to a green environment. However, their justification is flawed; renewable sources are contributing factors just like fossil fuels. With the resolution in effect, supplemental energy only calls for exceedingly greater implementations of resources to make up for the discarded fossil fuels. By doing so would contribute to not only the potential economic depression but to the environment as well. Jim Demint, a former South Carolina senator, reasons fossil fuels are at a higher standard. He reports natural resources have actually allowed improvement in the U.S. as it propels us away from coal and gas but proximate to a cleaner environment. Surprisingly, even with a rising population, emissions have only increased by 2% since 1990 (Demint, par. 2). Although emissions seem to be rising, they have also been dropping in recent years.

Despite the fact that the nation needs to focus on what can be done to fight climate change, Ocasio-Cortez directs more attention to social equality rather than the environment. Previously mentioned, Justin Haskins warns readers that the GND contains many socialist policies that ultimately have nothing to do with cleaning up the environment (Haskins, par. 29). Such policies call for universal access to healthier food options and universal health care. When focusing on these policies, there is less attention driven towards climate change. As a matter of fact, extraneous policies including high-quality health care and building a proper food system are delaying the process from what is truly pertinent for the world, reducing our emissions. Haskins is not the only one who feels this way, there are others, especially those who are right-leaning, who have joined the debate about what exactly social equality will do for the GND and climate change overall. Bob Inglis, the executive director of a nonprofit organization called RepublicEN, agrees with this argument proclaiming that the GND focuses more attention on social equality rather than climate change. Inglis asserts the U.S. needs to act quickly if people, in general, want to avoid the catastrophes brought along with climate change, implying social policies have to be let go (par. 14). This insinuates that the climate crisis is a situation that cannot be put to the side to come back to. This idea demonstrates that “if we really believe that global warming is an emergency situation, Congress needs to take that up first” (Grant, par. 16 ). By demanding this focus, the U.S. will see the change they are desperate to see, that being, fewer contributors to the climate crisis and having the opportunity to reverse the effects already present by climate change.

While conservatives argue that the GND will not be successful but rather a disaster for America, liberals argue that it is practicable and will be successful in decarbonizing. According to Jeffrey Sachs, a professor, and director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, regardless of opposing claims, “the Green New Deal agenda is both feasible and affordable” (Sachs, par. 6). Sachs argues Ocasio-Cortez’s GND should be supported as the threat of natural disasters occurring in the U.S. ranging anywhere from floods, hurricanes, and heat-waves was “costing the US more than \$450 billion during 2016-18” (par. 8) and with the GND, those numbers would fall. Sachs claim is valid; the GND can be used to improve the climate conditions, lessening the elevated number of natural disasters seen in the U.S. every year and eventually, costs, as there would be fewer detriments to cover. Unfortunately, Sachs’s claim has yet to be proven, leaving Republicans to protest it. Although AOC seeks job opportunities, there will be job loss in many fields “including all of those associated with the mining, refining, and burning of coal, oil, and gas” (Diep, par. 5). Despite the fact that jobs are guaranteed, it does not account for those who will face a job loss as a result of the GND. Job losses are hard to bounce back from and hit those who are living from paycheck to paycheck the hardest. It is in the best interest of the nation to reconsider the resolution and improve on current methods.

---

Rather than wasting crucial time on a proposal that has been proven to fail from past experiences, we as a nation need to focus on what has already shown to be working for us. For instance, President Trump and his administration have been implementing this method by “... increasing permits for pipeline infrastructure and extraction leases,” in order for the United States to reduce its carbon footprint. The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCSUSA) reveals “the roughly 800 million people currently living in extreme poverty will be most affected” and with regions becoming less livable, they’ll have to migrate (par. 13). Relying on the GND ignores the current situations of the roughly 800 million people living in poverty. However, the effectiveness of the GND could improve if tax funds were to go towards initiatives focused on finding a solution to emissions while aiding those who have been affected by climate change.

At the end of the day, everyone wants the same thing, to live in a cleaner and safer America. The GND is an answer to decarbonizing the nation, but unfortunately, it will take much longer than what we can afford. The manifesto behind the GND is flawed; it does not account for the costs, job losses, nor does it focus on the environment but rather social equality. Although the GND works to solve our emissions predicament, interfering policies get in the way of the larger concern, the environment. In low-income communities, those with an employee in the oil and gas industry cannot afford the possible hefty taxes. With jobs on the line, hefty taxes would only add stress on those who are susceptible. The GND alone will not get America to the point they wish to reach anytime in the near future. If there is any hope left, the attention and focus of the government and policymakers need to be on the environment and the environment only. Any additional worries can be attended to once we get climate change sorted out.