



## INVESTING IN A STRONGER AND BETTER ECONOMY

### SCHEDULE:

- 9:15 am – Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 10:00 am – Opening Remarks
- 10:15 am – Panel 1: Transportation
- 12:00 pm – Lunch
- 12:25 pm – Keynote Speaker
- 1:15 pm – Panel 2: Green Jobs
- 3:00 pm – Panel 3: Investments in Communities of Color
- 4:45 pm – Facilitated Table Discussions and Closing Remarks
- 5:30 pm – END

### Transportation and Clean Energy Investments, Panels 1 & 2

Public infrastructure is a key driver of economic growth and opportunity, yet as a share of GDP investments in infrastructure have stagnated over the past decade. Recently, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) estimated a \$2.2 trillion investment in the nation's infrastructure is needed over the next five years. As the dual crises of climate change and rising energy demand threaten our long-term economic prosperity, infrastructure investments are now increasingly recognized as having the potential to further our environmental and energy goals as well.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the Obama Administration's budget request hopefully serve as mere down-payments on a long-term commitment to a cleaner and more efficient economy. But going forward, how do these investments fit in with a strategy for broadly shared economic prosperity?

#### ***Transportation Infrastructure and Jobs***

Investments in the nation's surface transportation infrastructure over the last half-century have been vital to the nation's transformation into an economic superpower. With the interstate highway system now complete and an economy teetering on the brink of depression, this panel will discuss how a new transportation infrastructure policy can grow the economy and employ millions of American workers.

#### **Speakers:**

**ELLIOTT SCLAR**, Columbia University

**ROB PUENTES**, Brookings Institution

**JOSH BIVENS**, Economic Policy Institute

**ROB PADGETTE**, American Public Transportation Association

## **Green Economy and Jobs**

Moving towards a green economy will also promote job growth and long-term economic prosperity. Building new transmission lines, installing solar panels, weatherizing homes, and hooking up smart meters will all employ a new generation of workers trained in old skills, but for new purposes. This panel discusses what it means to American workers when grey jobs become green jobs.

### **Speakers:**

**JOHN IRONS**, EPI (Moderator)

**JEFF RICKERT**, AFL-CIO Center for Green Jobs

**JASON WALSH**, Green for All

**GREG LEROY**, Good Jobs First

## **Panel 3: Social Investment in Communities of Color**

Government social investment, historically, has been the catalyst for expanding the middle class in the United States. Wealth building initiatives like the Education Act of 1965 and the Homestead Act provided the means for jump starting economic mobility and laying the foundation for the generational transfer of wealth. Unfortunately, these benefits were not distributed equally among all communities.

The recent passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and Housing Rescue Bill provides a unique opportunity to close the economic gaps created by previous social investments which all but ignored the needs of communities of color. Unlike the upward mobility initiatives of the past like the GI Bill which failed to assist all Americans equally, new policies are needed to ensure that low to moderate incomes families and communities of color achieve economic security if our economy is to survive, thrive and grow.

The panel will discuss lessons learned from past government social investment initiatives, the current economic circumstances of communities of color, and whether at the current stimulus package can facilitate a fair distribution of the economic recovery.

### **Speakers:**

**JOSE A. GARCIA**, Associate Director for Policy and Research, Economic Opportunity Program, Demos

**JIM CARR**, Chief Operating Officer for the National Community Reinvestment Coalition

**CHRISTIAN DORSEY**, Communications Director, EPI

**LISA RICE**, Vice President of NFHA, National Fair Housing Alliance

**C. NICOLE MASON**, Executive Director, Women of Color Policy Network, NYU Wagner