

TURNING CLIMATE COMMITMENTS INTO ACTION: A JOINT LETTER ON PRIORITY INVESTMENTS

January 29, 2026

To: The Honourable Adrien Sala, Minister Responsible for Finance and Manitoba Hydro

CC: The Honourable Premier Wab Kinew,

The Honourable Mike Moyes, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Dear Hon. Minister Sala,

We, the **26 undersigned organizations**, are writing to urge you to invest in climate action and resilience in Manitoba through energy efficiency, public transportation, and nature protection in **budget 2026**.

Manitoba is one of the only provinces in Canada where emissions continue to trend in the wrong direction, with 2023 levels higher than 2005. As last summer's devastating wildfire season laid bare, climate change is already wreaking havoc on Manitoba's communities and economy. Now is the time to scale up solutions to prevent it from getting much worse, insulate Manitobans from future impacts, and create good green jobs throughout the province.

We recognize that your government has already taken some important steps in this regard, including the ambitious commitments set out in the Affordable Energy Plan and Manitoba's Path to Net Zero. However, the scale of action remains far from the pace required to bring our emissions to zero by mid-century.

In the upcoming budget, we encourage you to make bold investments in climate action to help close this gap. In particular, we urge you to support three priorities:

- **Significantly increase investment in energy efficiency** and demand response to reduce energy use, lower household bills, and create thousands of green jobs. Such investments could include smart meters and devices to shift electricity use away from peak times, significantly increasing the operating budget and staff complement of Efficiency Manitoba to scale up heat pump installations and retrofits, and developing an industry-informed labour development strategy, alongside non-budgetary measures like updating building codes. This aligns with your government's recent commitment to "new Efficiency Manitoba programming to cut energy waste and reduce reliance on fossil fuels across all fuel types and within the transportation sector."
- **Invest in low-carbon transportation** to improve affordability and mobility, and reduce emissions and air pollution. Such investments should include increased permanent and long-term operating funding for urban, intercity and rural public transit systems, alongside funding for active transportation and incentives for low-carbon transportation. This aligns with your government's recent commitment to "work with municipalities to expand public and regional transit systems while prioritizing net-zero vehicles."
- **Invest to protect 30% of lands and waters by 2030**, in partnership with Indigenous communities. Such investments should include significantly increased budget allocations for Parks branch staffing and consultations; a whole-of-government approach to conservation planning and implementation; a dedicated fund to support the capacity of Indigenous Nations; support to municipalities for natural infrastructure resilience projects; and the implementation of a feasibility study for the proposed marine conservation area in western Hudson Bay. This approach aligns with your government's recent commitment to "increase nature-based carbon sequestration activities to offset GHG emissions and build more climate-resilient rural and urban landscapes."

Each of these proposed investments has myriad co-benefits for Manitoban households and businesses, including improving health, affordability, access to employment, and local economic development. In addition to these priority areas, we hope to see continued and expanded support for Manitoba community non-profits, including multi-year, predictable, sustainable funding for environmental NGOs to help advance this work.

These investments could be funded through complementary fiscal policy reforms to increase revenue such as progressive changes to the income tax system to target benefits to working- and middle-class families.

Transforming Manitoba’s society and economy to transition off fossil fuels requires a transformative level of public investment. Experts widely agree that decarbonizing the economy and remaining competitive in the energy transition will require an annual investment of 2 per cent of GDP, which would be approximately \$1.4 billion in Manitoba. Manitoba should scale up funding, beginning in 2026 with a focus on the three recommendations above, to meet this target in the coming years. With rising extreme weather events and other climate damages, expanding investments in climate action now will be critical for long-term affordability.

List of 26 Signatory Organizations:

- Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1505
- Bike Winnipeg
- BizforClimate
- Climate Action Team Manitoba
- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Manitoba
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) - Manitoba
- Clayton Thomas-Mueller, Author, Artist & Advocate
- Climate Reality Project Canada
- Contemplative Manitoba
- Fireweed Food Co-op
- Green Action Centre
- Green Economy Canada
- Good Nature Veterinary Outreach
- Manitoba Eco-Network
- Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition (MEJC)
- Manitoba Council for International Cooperation
- Manitoba Public Health Association
- MakeWay Charitable Society - Climate Change Connection
- Prairie Climate Centre
- Save Our Seine River Environment Inc.
- Seniors4climate MB
- Sustainable Brandon
- Sustainable Building Manitoba
- Trees Please Winnipeg Coalition
- Wilderness Committee Manitoba

