

Leo W. Gerard  
International President

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Dear USW Member:

In the last few weeks you have probably seen an ad on television or in your local newspaper calling on all Americans to join in the fight to solve global warming. The WeCanSolveIt Campaign, led by former Vice President Al Gore, recently picked the Steelworkers and our Blue Green Alliance as its first grassroots' partner to help organize the American public to take on the challenge of the climate crisis.

In his speech accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, Al Gore offered a deeply optimistic vision of what we can do by becoming citizen activists in pursuit of renewable energy solutions to global warming.

"We have the ability," he told the Nobel Committee, "to solve this crisis and avoid the worst – though not all – of its consequences, if we act boldly, decisively and quickly."

That is why I am joining with Vice President Gore in urging all USW members, regardless of your own political views, to visit the campaign's website, [www.wecansolveit.org/steelworkers](http://www.wecansolveit.org/steelworkers), sign up, and learn more about how collective action can make a difference.

In the weeks ahead, USW member organizers, funded by the WeCanSolveIt Campaign, will be talking to you about the climate crisis and how its solutions will strengthen our economy, help save our jobs, create new jobs, and protect our families.

For our union, Al Gore's call for public action to combat global warming is compelling. It also reminds us of how proud we should be of our union, which long ago committed us to activism in the cause of combating industrial contamination.

At our Constitutional Convention in 1990, our union overwhelmingly endorsed the recommendations of a task force appointed by the International Executive Board and charged with identifying the greatest risks that our members and their families would confront in the years ahead.

I had the privilege of serving on that task force years before I became president. Our report was entitled, "Our Children's World," and long before many environmental groups had sounded the alarm, we concluded that global warming posed a dire threat to our members, our families and our communities; indeed, the entire world.

What Al Gore is urging us to understand is this:

**Combating global warming can create huge economic opportunities along with environmental solutions – especially today, with recession dragging down working families' prospects and putting millions at risk.**

That's why a new initiative being launched by Vice President Gore is so important. It calls on our political leaders to stop wasting billions in tax breaks for the rich and on subsidies for Big Oil, and to start investing instead in the good green jobs that will put America on the path to energy independence.

What defines a green job really isn't a mystery. It's simply a blue collar job with a green purpose. And there are millions to be had, if our leaders stop making bad choices and start investing in energy independence:

- Jobs assembling wind turbines like the 1400 Gamesa steelworkers in Pennsylvania.
- Jobs producing the steel plate at ArcelorMittal Steel for the blades and towers in the growing wind energy industry.
- Jobs for electricians, steam fitters, plumbers, sheet metal workers and other skilled tradesmen retrofitting America's buildings to reduce carbon-based energy use and its drastic impact on global warming.
- Jobs manufacturing the stainless steel needed to build biomass refineries and the American-made clean energy vehicles needed to lower carbon emissions.
- Thousands more jobs constructing a new electric grid to service the transformation needs of renewable energy industries.

Fortunately, our union has a unique opportunity to take action in your state to help build support for American job growth in pursuit of energy independence, thanks to the WeCanSolveIt Campaign.

The WE Campaign is airing TV ads that carry the message that citizen activism is the key to winning energy independence and combating global warming. In conjunction with this media effort, our union is sending 15 rank and file member organizers into the field in five states to ask for your support – all paid for by a contribution to the Blue Green Alliance from Vice President Gore's campaign.

The message our organizers are carrying is that combating climate change is not only the right thing to do, it's the best hope of protecting and restoring the decent-paying jobs that are currently being destroyed by globalization.

Jobs like the 9,000 or more that have been lost in the paper industry because of illegal clear cutting of the Indonesian rain forest – timber that China is using for pulp and then dumping it on the U.S. market at less than the cost of production.

The way for us to make the WE Campaign as successful as possible is for every one of us to become activists in the cause for green jobs and energy independence. In short, success depends in large part on as many of our members as possible getting active in the WeCanSolveIt campaign. Here's how you can help.

- First, visit the campaign's website, [www.wecansolveit.org/steelworkers](http://www.wecansolveit.org/steelworkers), sign up, and learn more about how collective action can make a difference.
- Second, join the growing number of your Steelworker sisters and brothers who are becoming activists in this cause by filling out the enclosed volunteer card that you can either mail back to us, or give to one of our organizers when they visit your workplace.
- Finally, urge your family members, friends and neighbors to join you as an activist in taking immediate action. For, as Al Gore said when he accepted the Nobel Prize:

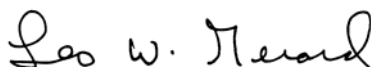
**“The future is knocking at our door right now. Make no mistake, the next generation will ask us one of two questions. Either they will ask, ‘What were you thinking; why didn’t you act?’ Or they will ask instead, ‘How did you find the moral courage to rise and successfully resolve a crisis that so many said was impossible to solve?’”**

Our union answered that question almost 20 years ago when we pledged ourselves to combating global warming so that our commitment to the health, safety and economic security of our members in the workplace could be extended to our families, our communities, and the world in which we live.

The WeCanSolveIt campaign gives us a rare opportunity to build on that great legacy by calling on our government to invest in the growth of industries that create good green jobs that will renew both the nation's sagging economy and our overheating environment.

We urge you to join us in that this effort – for our children and grandchildren and a better future for America, free from dependency on Mideast oil.

In solidarity,



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International President

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Enclosure