



**National Association of State Energy Officials
Board Resolution - Commitment to Equity, Access, and Inclusion**

WHEREAS, the members of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), the Energy Officials from the 56 States, Territories, and the District of Columbia, are united in our commitment to foster equity, diversity, respect, and inclusion in our policies, programs, workplaces, and actions;

WHEREAS, America’s racial discrimination, intolerance, and oppression have sown deep disparity and exclusion, as highlighted by the disproportionate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and the ongoing violence against BIPOC;

WHEREAS, many systemic inequities are a direct result of structural and institutional discrimination against BIPOC people;

WHEREAS, socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, sex, gender, age, English language proficiency, and disability are major factors in vulnerability to energy disruptions, disasters and climate change;

WHEREAS, lower-income households must devote significantly higher proportions of their income to energy expenses, and BIPOC and lower-income households face disproportionately higher rates of disconnection of utilities, which can be life-threatening;

WHEREAS, BIPOC experience redlining, poor access to housing, limited transportation options, and construction of heavily-trafficked transportation corridors in BIPOC communities;

WHEREAS, BIPOC and people with lower incomes experience disproportionately higher rates of cancer, asthma, and mortality due to greater exposure to environmental pollution;

WHEREAS, BIPOC experience higher rates of unemployment and a lack of access to quality education; many sectors of the U.S. energy economy employ BIPOC and female workers at lower rates than the national average; and Latinx workers in the U.S. energy economy are suffering higher job losses than their non-Latinx peers due to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, having a diverse workforce, inclusive of various ages, races and ethnicities, identities, backgrounds, and abilities, benefits residents and businesses and is essential to providing the energy solutions that our states, communities, and nation need;

WHEREAS, energy policy, program, and regulatory limitations, and a lack of access to highspeed internet, can prevent BIPOC, low-income, and geographically remote households from accessing energy programs as successfully as higher-income households in urban and suburban areas;

WHEREAS, NASEO members have the ability to investigate, inform, design, influence, and implement policies, programs, and regulations that affect the location, environmental impacts, and beneficiaries of energy infrastructure and facilities;

WHEREAS, NASEO established an Energy Equity Taskforce in 2019 to investigate, and educate State Energy Officials on, policymaking, stakeholder engagement, procurement, and program delivery principles that address disparities in costs, benefits, and access to energy programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NASEO Board of Directors encourages all State Energy Officials to recognize and eliminate disparities, inequities, injustices, and other effects of racism, oppression, and exclusion by advancing equitable and inclusive energy policies, programs, engagement, and decision-making.

NASEO commits to advancing equity, access, and inclusion by:

- Incorporating considerations of equity, inclusion, and underserved populations and communities in the development of national policy positions;
- Developing best practices of community engagement to ensure that recommendations on how to incorporate equity and inclusion in state energy policies are informed by the needs and perspectives of directly-affected communities;
- Partnering with minority and women member-based professional organizations to facilitate discussions and gain input regarding the development of meaningful strategies, policies, and programs to address racial and gender disparities, inequities, and injustice;
- Transitioning the Energy Equity Taskforce to a standing NASEO committee, charged with facilitating state engagement and collaboration with experts and stakeholders to identify, examine, and elevate strategies to advance equity, diversity, access, inclusion, and community engagement;
- Investing in staff education and advisory services to ensure NASEO resources and technical assistance advance considerations of equity, diversity, access, and inclusion; and
- Establishing “Juneteenth” as a voluntary day of education and service for and by NASEO staff with the aim of fostering a greater understanding of the history of racial intolerance and the value and importance of equity and inclusion.