July 29, 2021

The Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm, Secretary of the Department of Energy
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

Martin Keller, Director
National Renewable Energy Laboratories
901 D Street NW #930
Washington, DC 20024

RE: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND NATIONAL LABORATORIES DEVELOP ROADMAP TO 100% RENEWABLE AND JUST ENERGY FOR TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

Dear Secretary Granholm and Director Keller,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters nationwide, we, the undersigned 87 organizations urge the Department of Energy (DOE) to prioritize the Tennessee Valley Authority (“TVA”) as a national living laboratory to pioneer the country’s renewable and just energy transition urgently needed to combat the climate emergency. Specifically, we urge DOE, through the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) or other available authority, to develop the roadmap for TVA to provide 100% clean and renewable energy to the Tennessee Valley by 2030.

TVA has a proud history of serving the nation and people of the Tennessee Valley through ambitious missions around rural electrification, flood control, environmental stewardship, and job creation. TVA is well suited to repeat its earlier success as a renewable energy pioneer, and by relying on DOE’s remarkable ingenuity and scientific expertise, the utility could lead the country once again towards a just renewable energy transition.

Unfortunately, today TVA is 45% fossil-fueled and consistently ranks poorly on plans to retire coal, cease new gas plant construction, and build renewable energy within the next decade.¹ TVA’s current resource plan provides that TVA will still be generating more than 34 million tons of CO₂ annually in 2038,² and just recently the utility decided to add 1,500 MW of new gas for $1 billion.³ TVA has proposed retiring 2 of its 4 remaining coal plants, yet despite the climate emergency continues exploring new gas development and further dependence on fossil fuels.⁴ At the same time, TVA’s power company customers are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with TVA service, leading several to ask the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for permission to leave TVA’s service territory altogether.⁵

² TVA 2019 Environmental Impact Statement, Final EIS at 5-27.
⁵ Athens Utilities Board v. TVA, No. EL21-40-000 (FERC 2021).
In January, President Biden issued an Executive Order directing the country’s electricity sector to be carbon-free by 2035 and specifically calling for all agencies “to organize and deploy [their] full capacity . . . to combat the climate crisis.” Secretary Granholm has similarly underscored that DOE “has the solutions to tackle our climate emergency.” Among those solutions is DOE’s incredible national laboratories, including NREL, which DOE can harness to tackle one of the biggest challenges facing our nation: how to transition TVA – the nation’s single largest public power provider – from its heavy fossil fuel portfolio, to 100% renewable energy on a timeline consistent with climate science.

TVA has no roadmap toward the Biden administration’s stated climate goals. We therefore ask DOE, through NREL or other available authority, to develop a concrete plan for TVA’s renewable and just energy transition, maximizing distributed and decentralized energy resources and ensuring union jobs and strong labor standards for workers. We are encouraged by NREL’s recent report outlining Los Angeles’ path to 100% renewable energy by mid-century as well as the innovative Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative to advance distributed energy to transform Hawaii’s energy system to 100% clean energy by 2045. NREL can apply that same technical expertise to develop a concrete clean energy plan that will justly transition TVA to 100% renewable energy by 2030, with an emphasis on building community-based and rooftop solar systems, energy efficiency, battery storage, and microgrids to enhance climate resilience. This plan would both serve TVA as well as all private and public utilities as a model for a public, democratic, and distributed renewable energy system that addresses the disproportionate burden Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other communities of color, low-wealth, and rural communities experience from the existing utility system nationwide.

Sincerely,

[Signatories begin on next page.]

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7 Secretary Jennifer Granholm, Message to America (Feb. 25, 2021), at https://www.energy.gov/articles/secretary-granholms-message-america.

8 See FAR 35.017-3.


CONVENING PARTNERS

Gaby Sarri-Tobar  
*Energy Justice Campaigner*  
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*Tennessee Representative*  
**Sierra Club Beyond Coal Campaign**  
**THE SIERRA CLUB**

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*TN Field Organizer*  
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**PARTNERSHIP FOR SOUTHERN EQUITY**

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**THE PEOPLE’S JUSTICE COUNCIL**

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*Co-Convener*  
**CLIMATE CHATTANOOGA**

Betsy Garber  
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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Harriet Festing</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<td>RL Miller</td>
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<td>Sam Sheka Mo</td>
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<td>Carmi Orenstein</td>
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<td>Kathleen Rogers</td>
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<td>Stephen Simon</td>
<td>Co-Chair, National Policy Committee</td>
<td>ELDERS CLIMATE ACTION</td>
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<td>Mitch Jones</td>
<td>Policy Director</td>
<td>FOOD &amp; WATER WATCH</td>
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<td>Jason Miller</td>
<td>Director of Campaigns and Development</td>
<td>FRANCISCAN ACTION NETWORK</td>
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<td>Dorinda Moreno</td>
<td>Founder, Principal</td>
<td>GREAT OLD BROADS FOR WILDERNESS</td>
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<td>Shelley Silbert</td>
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<td>Fletcher Harper</td>
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<td>August Allen</td>
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<td>Tiffany Hartung</td>
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<td>Nancy LaPlaca</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>LA PLACA AND ASSOCIATES LLC</td>
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<td>Emily Martin</td>
<td>National Policy and Programs Manager</td>
<td>OUR CLIMATE</td>
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<td>Matt Bruenig</td>
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LETTER FROM 80+ ORGANIZATIONS
URGING DOE & NREL FOR ROADMAP TO 100% RENEWABLE AT TVA BY 2030

July 29, 2021

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<td>Stephen Brittle</td>
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<td>Alison Burchell</td>
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<td>Kathy Greggs</td>
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<td>Veronica Butcher</td>
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<td>Gail Duncan</td>
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