First, climate change.

We cannot build the Los Angeles our children — and their children — deserve unless we protect

the planet that they will inherit.

The students and teachers at Lincoln know this well — because studying the environment is part

of the core curriculum here for every young person.

One of them is Emily Tieu [TOO].

Emily is a junior in the Environmental and Social Policy Magnet. When she was a little girl, she

was horrified at the sight of a massive fire on the evening news… she thought the world was

ending. That day, she told her dad she would be the one to save it.

Well, after what she’s achieved on this campus, you’d be a fool to bet against her.

She’s already produced a documentary about how people can fight climate change … she’s

raised funds to build a greenhouse on this campus …

And for her capstone project next year, she plans on turning sugar and corn syrup into ethanol …

and using that biofuel to power a light bulb.

Emily isn’t the only one in the Lincoln community — or her generation — prepared to do battle

with climate change.

She knows, in her words, that — and I quote — there are “a lot of bright minds ready to make a

difference … ready to show us a better way to live.”

Emily, you’re right. That must be our mission: to make a difference and find a better way to live.

We have to find solutions everywhere, starting in our own backyards.

Because this crisis isn’t a distant tragedy.

It’s all around us — in the pollution that we inhale, the flames on our hillsides, the floods in our

streets.

And it’s hitting our pocketbooks too: the regional administrator of FEMA recently told me his

agency distributed $80 billion dollars in taxpayer funds for disaster relief in the last two years —

and that was the same amount America spent in the previous 27 .

At that pace, climate change may well erase everything we’re working on.

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Because who cares how many potholes we fill if Venice is underwater?

Will our 911 call times matter if all of our firefighters are off battling flames?

If our city is overwhelmed by climate refugees, do we really think we’ll be concerned about

reducing library hours or cutting back park programs?

This climate emergency is real, and it’s happening everywhere …

That’s why I founded Climate Mayors, now a coalition of 422 cities representing over 70 million

Americans … and why I’ve been so active in C40, a global network of 94 megacities determined

to uphold the Paris Agreement and to pave the way to a zero emissions future.

While the crisis has never been more intense … the solutions have never been more achievable.

All that’s been missing is the will to act with urgency and the scale needed to meet this moment.

It’s been exciting for me to hear lawmakers in Washington talk about a Green New Deal … but

I’d say to our leaders in our nation’s capital: You don’t need to look across the aisle to find

solutions — just look across the country, to Los Angeles.

The Green New Deal is built on two main principles: protect our environment and make the

economy work for everyone.

And four years ago, we released our Sustainable City pLAn to do just that, to build on the three

Es as we call them: the environment, the economy, and equity.

We set out 61 outcomes in 14 categories with hard deadlines — and I’m proud to report that

we’ve met or exceeded 90% of our goals on time or early.

Working with the Council, we integrated the environment into all of our policymaking … and

directed every department to appoint a chief sustainability officer.

I said we would completely wean ourselves off of coal power plants by 2025, and we will…

We’ve invested in record numbers of renewables … and I was proud to make the decision to stop

the re-powering of three natural gas power plants on our coast, so we’ll be not just coal-free, but

carbon free.

Together, we made L.A. the number-one solar city in America. And guess what else we did? We

created 35,000 green jobs. We reduced our greenhouse gas emissions 11% in a single year, while

cutting unemployment by nearly 14% at the same time.

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So now we’re going to double down on L.A.’s Green New Deal … and keep working towards

our ultimate goal: to become a carbon-neutral city with a thriving middle class.

Let me lay out the vision for us to get there. We will zero out our main sources of harmful

emissions: buildings, transportation, electricity, and trash …

And we will lead with the boldest possible action on every front:

One, we will mandate zero carbon buildings, ensuring that every skyscraper, commercial

development, home, and municipal office will be emissions-free by 2050.

Two, we’ll build a zero emissions transportation network, putting more charging stations in our

neighborhoods … and giving Angelenos more options to get out of their cars and onto public

transit, bikes, scooters, car shares, and buses.

Three, we’ll build a zero carbon electricity grid … reaching 80% clean energy by 2036 … as we

lead our state toward 100% renewables by 2045.

Four, we’ll achieve a zero waste future, marking the end of plastic straws, styrofoam, and

single-use takeout containers in our city by 2028 … and by 2050, we won’t send a single piece

of trash to the landfill.

And water:

We’ll deliver a second Mulholland moment by recycling 100% of our wastewater by 2035.

That’s like building three L.A. Aqueducts.

Taken together … when we meet these goals … we will cut our emissions by 30 percent. That’s

the equivalent of shutting down 50 coal-fired power plants.

But our goal with the Green New Deal isn’t to simply set ambitious policy objectives — it’s to

implement them. And that requires strong leadership.

So tonight, I’m announcing the establishment of the Los Angeles Climate Emergency Council, to

direct our city’s efforts. This Council will draw the best ideas from neighborhoods on the front

lines of climate change … harness the expertise of scientists … and recommend long-term

actions to reduce rising temperatures.

With the Climate Emergency Council in place, our Green New Deal will build aggressively on

the efforts of my Sustainability team, and the extraordinary leadership of Councilmembers

Martinez and Koretz.

We must ensure Los Angeles can survive this challenge.

And because our work in addressing climate change has always been about economic justice,

we’ll make L.A. the green jobs capital of America…

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With new training at Trade Tech to teach students how to manage stormwater projects …

With jobs installing more solar panels and standing up energy-efficient homes and buildings …

With careers developing new energy technologies … leading to more prosperity, more savings,

and a cleaner, safer planet.

That’s why I’m also announcing the formation of a new Jobs Cabinet, led by John Reamer and

our Economic and Workforce Development Department. The Jobs Cabinet will bring city,

business, education, and labor leaders together to support training programs and create 300,000

good, green jobs in the next 15 years …

We’ll work with Councilmember Harris-Dawson so those middle-class jobs go to Angelenos

from the communities of color and low-income neighborhoods that often bear the brunt of

climate change … and we’ll work with the Building Trades to ensure we’re protecting the

livelihoods of our workers…

It’s mission critical that our Green New Deal supports everyone — whether it’s small business

owners who can’t afford to keep the air-conditioning running during brutally hot summers … or

people with asthma or cancer living next to an oil well … and thank you, City Attorney Feuer,

for your fight on behalf of those families ...

That means putting those most impacted by this crisis at the front of the line for new solar

panels, trees, and cool pavement.

There’s no question: this is the fight of our lives. And we’re ready for it.

We will release L.A.’s updated Green New Deal later this month. It is a call to arms, and I invite

you to join me in this monumental effort.

Because when my grandchildren ask whether I did everything possible to fight climate change, I

want to be able to say: Yes, I did … I want us to be able to say: Yes, we did.

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