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Good afternoon and thank you all for joining us here today. My name is Joanne Kilgour and I serve as the Executive Director of the Ohio River Valley Institute, an independent, nonprofit research and communications center producing sound research for a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous Appalachia.

Thank you to Jake Pawlak and Mayor Gainey for your leadership on climate and energy issues and for joining us here today as we all come together at the Global Clean Energy Action Forum to share ideas on how to deliver a successful global green transition.

For those of us in the United States, this gathering is taking place on the heels of historic federal legislation - the Inflation Reduction Act that will lead to investments of \$369 billion in energy, climate, and justice over the next decade, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that directed \$62 billion in clean energy related federal funds to be administered by U.S. Department of Energy.

The Inflation Reduction Act contains provisions that will provide funding necessary to expand clean, renewable energy and on-shore clean energy manufacturing, improve residential energy efficiency, and expand access to clean transportation. But it also provides expanded tax credits for carbon capture, a still overly costly and unproven technology-based approach to decarbonization.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will enable us to invest in strategies to clean up legacy pollution from the oil and gas and mining industries, expand clean transportation, invest in weatherization and reduce the energy burden for those most vulnerable in our communities, and develop a clean energy workforce and clean energy manufacturing capabilities. But the Infrastructure Act also allocated \$8 billion in subsidies for four hydrogen hubs that has set off a race among fossil fuel states like Pennsylvania to position themselves as the leaders for blue hydrogen and CCUS technologies.

With these new legislative initiatives and the resources they convey, communities across the country are faced with important decisions on the direction of our energy transition and approach to addressing climate change. While experts in the field of [climate science](#) are warning of catastrophic consequences if we fail to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius - consequences like runaway ice melting, ocean current disruption and local impacts like flooding and severe weather events - some regional leaders are seeking support - and federal dollars through the Infrastructure Law - for a [“mid-point” pathway](#) that would instead target a limit of 2 degrees Celsius. This mid-point pathway favors decarbonization through strategies like blue hydrogen and carbon capture, use, and sequestration that maintain our dependence on fossil fuels rather than achieving the emissions reductions necessary to avoid the catastrophic consequences scientists are warning against.

We instead propose an alternative pathway that enables us - even in the 10 counties surrounding Allegheny County, where we are located today - to meet the emission reductions necessary to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, cultivate new family-sustaining jobs, and leverage the federal resources available to maximize the climate impact and community benefits we so desperately need.

To speak more about this pathway, I am pleased to introduce my colleague, Sean O’Leary.