



Comments on the Creation of an American Climate Corps by KABOOM!

KABOOM! is the national nonprofit dedicated to ending playspace inequity in communities across the country. Because playspaces represent a significant portion of public land they can have a profound impact on a city or community's climate action plan. Traditionally designed and installed playgrounds now present a challenge to many neighborhoods that are struggling with extreme heat, increased levels of rainfall, and more intense weather patterns. KABOOM! is working with federal, state, and local policymakers to embrace the construction of playspaces that take our changing climate into account and help mitigate against the most severe impacts of anthropogenic climate change, particularly in Black and brown communities which have borne the brunt of disinvestment and environmental degradation.

To undertake this work, KABOOM! recognizes the need for a larger and better trained workforce that can help construct and maintain these kinds of urban greenspaces. The creation of an American Climate Corps can meet this need by providing a ready force of workers that can help scale our efforts to build playspaces with communities that include a greater amount of natural and manufactured shade, additional spaces for urban gardening (which not only helps draw more carbon out of the atmosphere but also helps neighborhoods manage rainfall better), use natural and recycled materials for the play equipment, and feature color schemes that reflect more of the sun's rays than the traditional darker colors that have been used.

Constructing, maintaining, and supervising play on these types of playspaces takes a new set of skills that most employees of recreation and parks departments, school facilities departments, and public housing authorities do not yet have. American Climate Corps members dedicated to this work, especially Black, Indigenous, and brown residents who come from the communities most negatively affected by climate change, will be able to accelerate the creation of these critically needed spaces while becoming vital members of the new urban greenspace workforce after they complete their service. Without that kind of well-trained, dedicated, and experienced workforce to help build and maintain these new and innovative kinds of playspaces, the United States will not be positioned to maximize the climate benefits that parks and other family-focused public spaces can offer.

We hope that in the design of the state and local programs that will become the American Climate Corps, the need for a dedicated group of members who are focused on creating and maintaining innovative urban greenspaces—like KABOOM! playspaces—is recognized and acted upon. The human capital to support policies on making our communities more climate

resilient are just as important as the fiscal resources needed to implement this societal change.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this new and exciting initiative. KABOOM! stands in strong support of this initiative and looks forward to having the opportunity to work with partners across the public and private sectors to build the climate workforce of the future.