



Patterns in Energy and Environment Program Spending: CALIFORNIA

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Communities across the country benefited from \$230 billion in federal investments in clean energy and environmental protections in 2024, including economically distressed and rural counties, Tribes and small businesses, and red and blue Congressional districts.

Federal funding supports critical infrastructure and environmental protections, including for energy, clean drinking water, rail, food security and farming, and affordable housing in communities across the nation—collectively referred to as “energy and environment protection” investment or spending in this analysis. That federal funding is delivered through grants and loans to local governments, states, Tribes, and small business. This research looks at spending patterns from 2010-2024, showing how federal spending is critical to local and state economies, and how the distribution of those funds matters.

White House Executive Orders 14008 (2021)¹ and 14096 (2023)² framed the Justice 40 Initiative, which “made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.” We analyzed Federal Aid (loans and grants) spending for 468 of 518 Justice 40 programs from 2010 to 2024 using the US Department of Treasury’s [USA Spending database](#)³. Our analysis looked at funds going to Tribes, rural counties⁴, “disadvantaged” areas identified by the Council on Environmental Quality’s Climate and Economic Justice

¹ Executive Order 14008. January 27, 2021. Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. Accessed at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/01/2021-02177/tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad>.

² Executive Order 14096. April 21, 2023. Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All. Accessed at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/04/26/2023-08955/revitalizing-our-nations-commitment-to-environmental-justice-for-all>.

³ USA Spending. 2024. Accessed at <https://www.usaspending.gov/>.

⁴ Health Resources and Services Administration, Office of Rural Health Policy. 2024. List of Rural Counties And Designated Eligible Census Tracts in Metropolitan Counties. Accessed at <https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/rural-health/resources/forhp-eligible-areas.pdf>.

Screening Tool (CJEST)⁵, counties with lower incomes and/or high unemployment⁶, and highly vulnerable communities⁷.

From 2010 to 2024, \$239.76 billion was invested in California via federal energy and environment programs. Annual amounts increased from \$16.99 billion in 2010 to \$24.88 billion in 2024.

Of the total \$239.76 billion distributed between 2010 to 2024, \$1.57 billion (or 0.7%) was granted to Tribes (see Table 1). This amount grew from \$49.64 million in 2010 to \$252.04 million in 2024. In the same period, \$8.79 billion (or 3.7%) was granted to rural counties in California.

Table 1. Proportions of Total Energy and Environment Spending (2010-2024) to Tribes, Rural Counties, Distressed Counties, and Highly Vulnerable Counties in California.

Measure of “Disadvantage”	% to Disadvantaged Counties				
Year	2013	2017	2022	2024	Average % (2010-2024)
CJEST Distressed Counties	16.6%	31.5%	25.2%	27.7%	28.4%
Tribes	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	1.0%	0.7%
Rural Counties	1.3%	3.0%	4.2%	3.3%	3.7%
Economically Distressed Counties	18.2%	37.4%	31.2%	32.8%	33.7%
SVI Highly Vulnerable Counties	23.1%	40.6%	34.4%	36.2%	38.7%

⁵ Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. 2024. Public Environmental Data Partners. Accessed at <https://screening-tools.com/>.

⁶ Congressional Research Service. 2023. Areas of Economic Distress for EDA Activities and Programs. Accessed at <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/IF12074.pdf>

⁷ Centers for Disease Control. 2024. SVI Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Place and Health - Geospatial Research, Analysis, and Services Program (GRASP). Accessed at <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/place-health/php/svi/svi-frequently-asked-questions-faqs.html>

The greatest share of energy and environment investments (\$94.85 billion, or 39.6%) came through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, especially the Section 8 Housing Choice program provided to tenants and the Project-Based Rental Assistance program that subsidizes rental units directly.

The federal Department of Transportation invested nearly the same amount (\$94.11 billion, or 39.3%), largely through the Highway Planning and Construction and Transit-Oriented Development Planning (TOD) programs that fund planning, public works, transportation, construction/renewal/rehabilitation projects and fixed guideway investments such as new and expanded rail and bus rapid transit.

The Highway Planning and Construction Program is a broad umbrella that includes the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program (NEVI), improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, railroad safety, and highway widening projects. Some of these are climate-friendly projects, others are not, but the program is important to rural areas for transportation and transit access.

The Department of Energy (\$13.67 billion, or 5.7%) and the National Science Foundation (\$8.82 billion, or 3.7%) also invested significant amounts. Different programs were more important for particular recipient types based on amounts invested (see Table 2).

Table 2. Programs with the Most Energy and Environment Spending (2010-2024) to Tribes and Business.

Recipient Type	Programs with the most spending to the recipient type
Tribes	Highway Planning and Construction (Department of Transportation) - \$320.47 million Federal Transit Capital Investment Grants (Department of Transportation) - \$229.41 million Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) (Environmental Protection Agency) - \$137.66 million Indian Housing Block Grants (Department of Housing and Urban Development) - \$121.87 million Indian Community Development Block Grant Program (Department of Housing and Urban Development) - \$111.63 million

Business	Project-Based Rental Assistance (Department of Housing and Urban Development) - \$23.96 billion Office of Science Financial Assistance Program (Department of Energy) - \$2.53 billion Rural Rental Assistance Payments (Department of Agriculture) - \$1.62 billion Grid Infrastructure Deployment and Resilience (Department of Energy) - \$1.11 billion Renewable Energy Research and Development (Department of Energy) - \$985.32 million

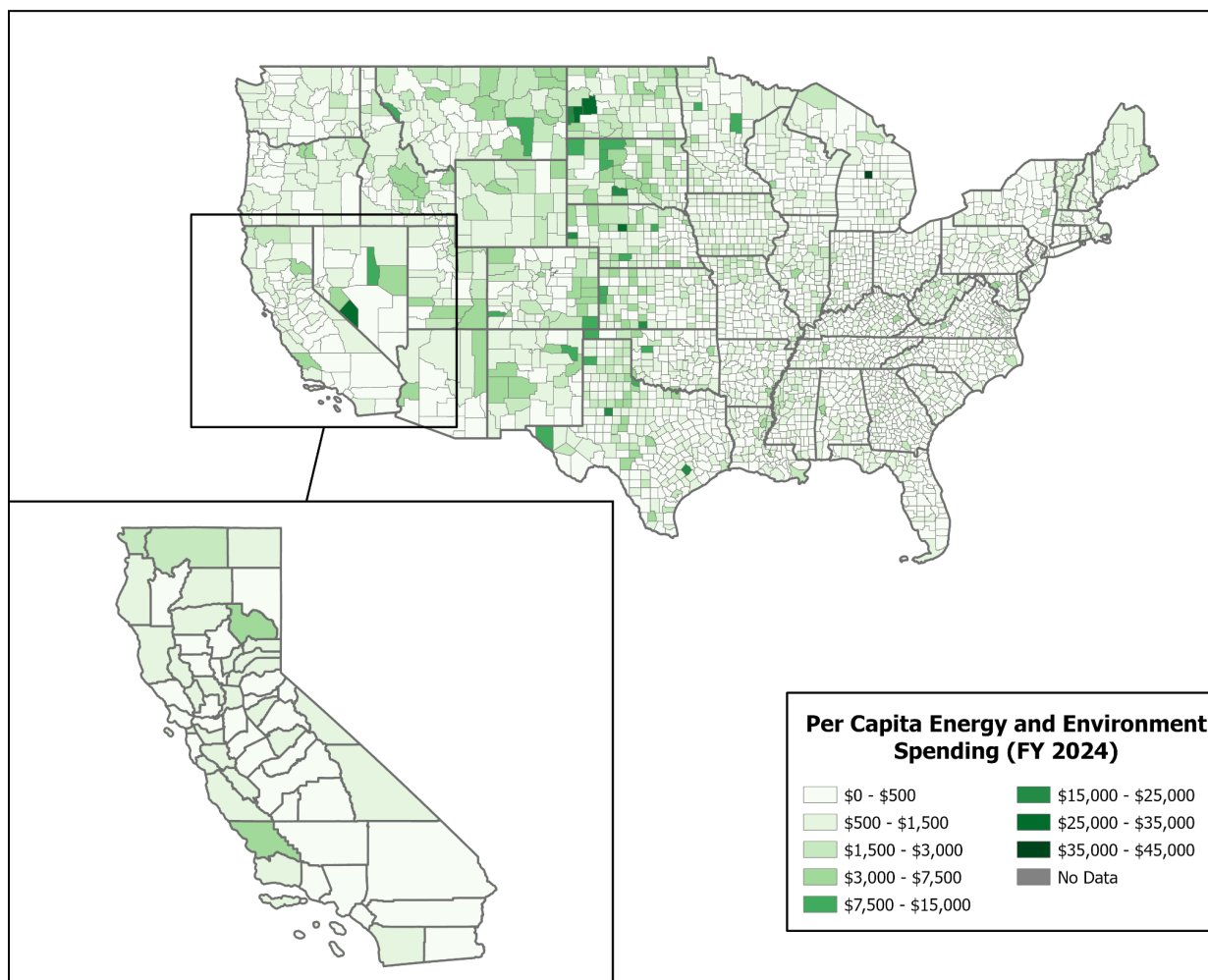
Funding to Counties

Statewide, California's per capita investment over the 2010-2024 period grew from \$430.12 per capita in 2010, to \$444.20 per capita in 2020, and grew more to \$611.91 per capita in 2024. The per capita spending rank in 2024 was 30 out of 50 states.

Table 3. Counties with the most and least per capita federal investment in energy and environmental protections in 2024

Most Per Capita Spending	Spending (FY 24)	Least Per Capita Spending*	Spending (FY 24)
Plumas County, CA	\$5,703.55	Lassen County, CA	\$(194.03)
San Luis Obispo County, CA	\$4,323.71	Tuolumne County, CA	\$101.20
Siskiyou County, CA	\$2,008.65	Glenn County, CA	\$122.63
Del Norte County, CA	\$1,808.55	Amador County, CA	\$139.62
Mono County, CA	\$1,369.05	Imperial County, CA	\$225.96

Figure 1. Per capita federal investment in energy and environmental protections by county in 2024



Spending by Congressional District (2024)

Table 4. Congressional districts with the most and least total federal investment in 2024

District	Total Spending (FY24)	District	Total Spending (FY24)
CA-01	\$392.81 million (37.4% rural, 9.1% Tribal)	CA-27	\$25.07 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-02	\$424.42 million (66.6% rural, 17.6% Tribal)	CA-28	\$738.89 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-03	\$446.43 million (51.3% rural, 0.9% Tribal)	CA-29	\$44.32 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-04	\$349.75 million (10.8% rural, 2.0% Tribal)	CA-30	\$125.85 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-05	\$156.33 million (39.5% rural, 5.4% Tribal)	CA-31	\$57.5 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-06	\$112.07 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-32	\$127.91 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)

District	Total Spending (FY24)	District	Total Spending (FY24)
CA-07	\$396.93 million (0% rural, 0.1% Tribal)	CA-33	\$200.72 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-08	\$148.00 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-34	\$1.16 billion (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-09	\$211.94 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-35	\$58.15 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-10	\$256.84 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-36	\$348.94 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-11	\$763.64 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-37	\$183.44 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-12	\$1.11 billion (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-38	\$68.89 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-13	\$124.29 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-39	\$199.68 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-14	\$251.64 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-40	\$23.15 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-15	\$195.30 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-41	\$10.84 million (0% rural, 11.6% Tribal)
CA-16	\$171.59 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-42	\$157.84 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-17	\$112.70 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-43	\$91.94 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-18	\$691.73 million (6.1% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-44	\$197.73 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-19	\$311.23 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-45	\$63.41 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-20	\$61.76 million (0% rural, 7.2% Tribal)	CA-46	\$457.99 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-21	\$234.25 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-47	\$215.23 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-22	\$81.08 million (0% rural, 6.3% Tribal)	CA-48	\$30.46 million (0% rural, 53.1% Tribal)
CA-23	\$11.75 million (0% rural, 5.8% Tribal)	CA-49	\$63.69 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-24	\$1.58 billion (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-50	\$699.10 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)
CA-25	\$64.97 million (0% rural, 14.7% Tribal)	CA-51	\$316.67 million (0% rural, 1.6% Tribal)
CA-26	\$199.72 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)	CA-52	\$48.52 million (0% rural, 0% Tribal)

Figure 2. Total federal investment by congressional district in 2024

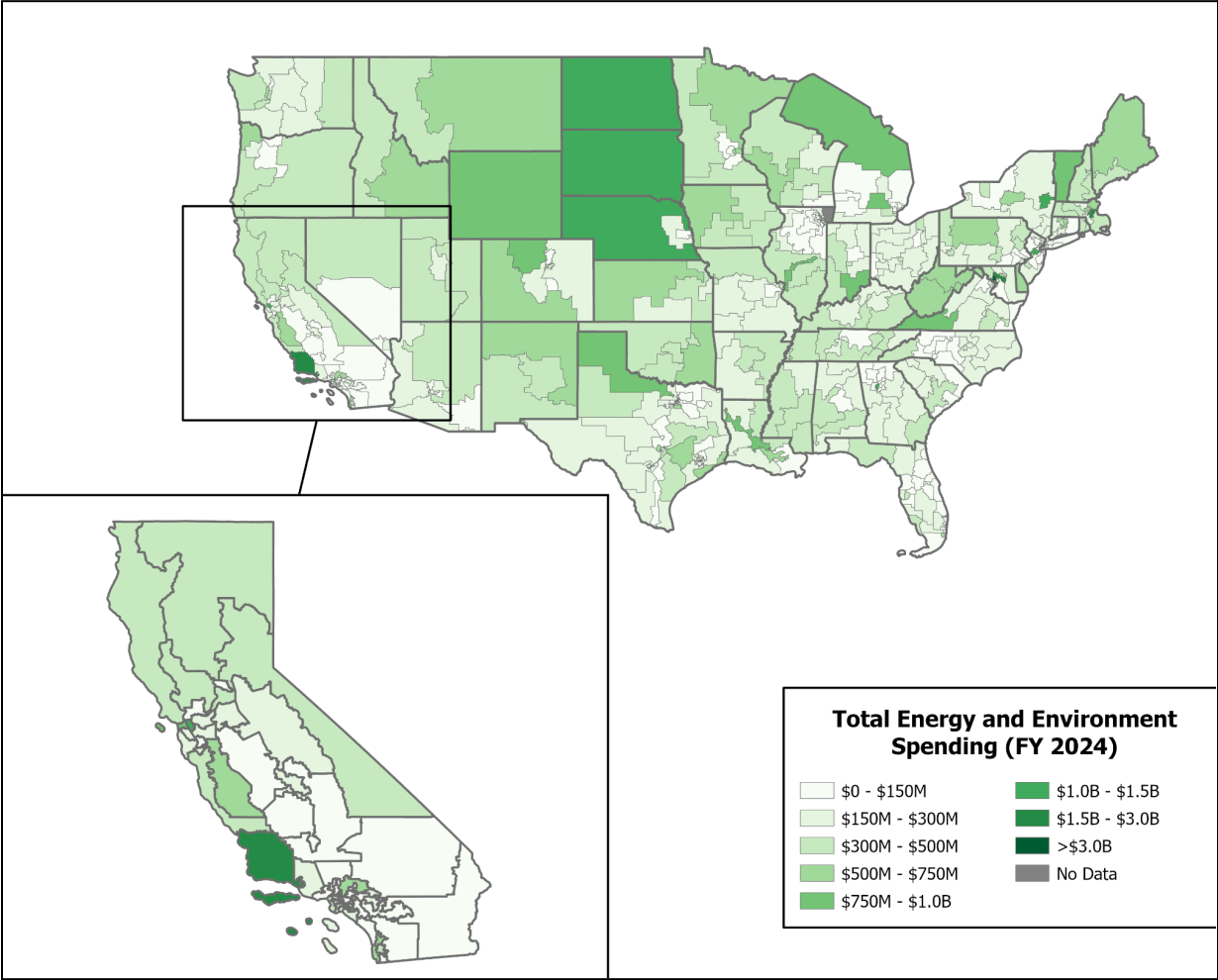
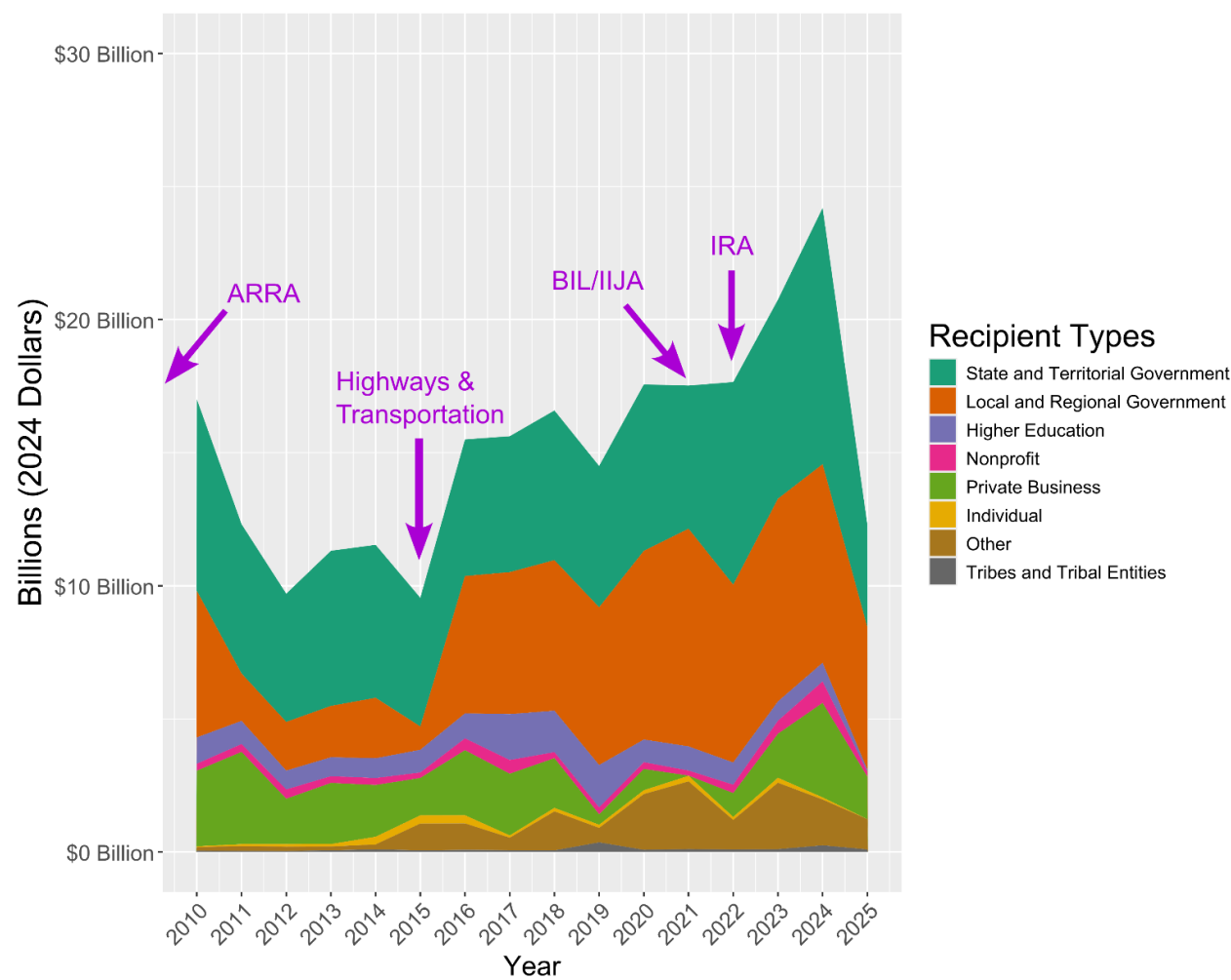


Figure 3. Federal Energy and Environment Spending 2010-2025



Note: FY2025 is partial year data for 6 months (October 2024 to April 2025)