August 5, 2019

Tom Perez  
Chair  
Democratic National Committee  
430 South Capitol St. SE  
Washington, D.C. 20003  

Re: Urgent Request for a DNC Debate on Climate Change

Dear Chair Perez:

No other issue facing Americans today reaches the importance of the climate emergency. Its broad implications involve threats to our national security, public health, and agricultural production. Rising seas and coastal erosion, increasing wildfires, more destructive storms, and worsening flooding and droughts put people and property at risk. These impacts will cause the greatest harm to the most marginalized members of our society. Therefore, the Henry M. Jackson Foundation Board of Governors adds its voice to those urging the DNC to hold a presidential debate dedicated entirely to the climate crisis.

For 35 years, the Jackson Foundation has advanced the work of Senator Jackson. His legacy includes national environmental protection legislation, along with a consistent track record of defending our national security and supporting our military. To advance that legacy, the Foundation has worked to shine a spotlight on the national security threats that are exacerbated by climate change, and we have highlighted military voices as a way to bring new attention and a different perspective to this important discussion. Through these efforts, the Jackson Foundation has become a recognized philanthropic leader on climate security matters.

The impacts of climate change on national security, including the challenges to our military installations and their surrounding communities, must be addressed by our president and Congress. That will require a return to bipartisan, science-based decisionmaking that preserves the long-term viability of our planet.

This message needs to be elevated to our national political stage – immediately – because the impacts are being felt now, and will grow to catastrophic proportions if we do not act swiftly. The Jackson Foundation believes that a
debate focused entirely on climate change would encourage the Democratic presidential candidates to make it a central feature of their platforms; motivate them to become more knowledgeable about the complex issues involved; and facilitate a more substantive, informative, national dialogue on the existential issue of our generation.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to schedule a DNC debate dedicated entirely to climate change at the earliest possible opportunity.

Sincerely,

Craig Gannett
President