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## **The Climate Center Urges Governor Newsom to Issue Comprehensive Executive Order to Respond to Climate Crisis**

(September 22, 2020, Santa Rosa, CA). Following a record-breaking 3.6 million acres burned in California wildfires in 2020, along with weeks of unbreathable air and apocalyptic skies, the Climate Center has urged Governor Newsom to **accelerate California’s existing greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to achieve 80% below 1990 levels and net-negative emissions\* by 2030**. [The Climate Center](#) submitted science-based recommendations calling for Governor Newsom to issue a comprehensive [Executive Order](#) (EO) to address the climate crisis and re-assert California’s global leadership in climate policy.

“Governor Newsom is poised to provide the bold vision and aggressive action necessary to cut greenhouse gases in the timeframe demanded by the latest climate science,” said Ellie Cohen, CEO of The Climate Center. “Recent climate studies show that [9 of 15 global climate change tipping points](#) have already been activated. We are in a climate emergency. We have the solutions and can reverse this catastrophic trend, but only if we act at speed and scale now.”

“The nation and the world are looking to California for climate leadership. This is Governor Newsom’s ‘Winston Churchill moment.’ The science and rapidly worsening climate reality call for accelerated climate action now,” said Cohen. “With Governor Newsom’s bold leadership, California can lead the nation and the world toward securing a just transition to a healthy, equitable and vibrant future for all.”

The proposed [Executive Order](#) operationalizes the greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets called for in The Climate Center’s [Climate-Safe California](#) initiative, a science-based roadmap for urgently needed efforts, already [endorsed](#) by a wide spectrum of California leaders, including:

- “I strongly endorse the goal of Climate-Safe California to achieve net-negative emissions by 2030. 2050 is too late. The campaign’s focus on science, urgency, and policy is exactly what’s needed – and California must lead the way.” -*Terry Tamminen, CAL EPA Secretary under Governor Schwarzenegger*
- “Climate-Safe California can be our reality. It puts people to work by accelerating our renewable energy, energy storage, smart-grid, and electric vehicle goals. It can and must be part of a transformation that promotes social and racial justice by investing in our disadvantaged communities.” -*Professor Daniel Kammen, UC Berkeley; IPCC Coordinating Lead Author; Former Science Envoy, US State Department*
- “Building livable, sustainable and equitable communities requires accelerating climate policy timelines, state support of local government mitigation and resilience efforts, and engaging local communities. We strongly support the

urgent goals of Climate-Safe California. We must act as though our future depends on it. It does.” - *Kate Meis, Executive Director, Local Government Commission*

- “California must lead the world by achieving the goals of Climate-Safe California. Drawing down the carbon we’ve already put into the atmosphere is central to the State achieving carbon neutrality and net-negative emissions. It is time for the Governor to lead by enacting a comprehensive Executive Order that places carbon sequestration on California’s natural and working lands, at scale, as a centerpiece of our pathway toward a livable and climate resilient future. Meeting this goal will have cascading beneficial impacts on CA’s communities and vital ecosystems.” - *Jeff Creque, PhD, and Torri Estrada, Carbon Cycle Institute*
- "No one can deny the health and safety impacts that our climate related risks are creating. Having worked as an emergency room nurse, I know that there are some things that you must do immediately to save imperiled lives. We are in a climate emergency that requires immediate and decisive actions to save lives and to protect future generations. We urge Governor Newsom to accelerate climate policy timelines now." – *Barbara Sattler, RN, PhD, FAAN; Professor, Public Health Program University of San Francisco; Board Member, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments*

Current California climate goals are inadequate based on the latest climate science, and are substantially behind relative to recently-developed federal proposals to address the climate crisis, including achieving 100% clean electricity by 2030, 100% zero emissions vehicles by 2035 and near-zero emissions by 2040. Current California policies call for just 60% renewable energy powered electricity by 2030, provide no deadline for phasing-out fossil fuel powered cars or trucks, and only aspire to carbon neutrality followed by net-negative emissions by 2045.

Key elements of the proposed Executive Order to achieve net-negative emissions by 2030 include the following:

- Direct the California Air Resources Board to work with relevant state agencies to develop a framework for achieving 80% below 1990 levels of greenhouse gas emissions (86 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e annually) and net-negative emissions by 2030;
- Ensure that workers and communities dependent on fossil fuel industries are provided skilled, good wage, transferable jobs that take advantage of their existing skill sets and are not left behind;
- Prioritize frontline communities, including low-income communities and communities of color, in all policies to achieve the net-negative emissions by 2030 target, ensuring accessibility to state clean energy and mobility incentive programs as well as improved air quality and enhanced health, economic and energy resilience;
- Phase-out development, production, and use of fossil fuels in transportation, building, agriculture and other sectors, including immediately halting new oil and gas well permits, ending all new gas-powered vehicle registrations by 2030, reducing vehicle miles traveled by significantly expanded internet access and telecommuting options; achieving

100% clean energy for electricity by 2030, and rapidly phasing out the use of methane gas in existing buildings;

- Expand habitat and soil management practices on California's working and natural lands to sequester an additional 100 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e annually by 2030 while also increasing resilience, water holding capacity, biodiversity, and food security;
- Develop a policy framework to support the efforts of local governments to plan for and increase resilience in their communities to mitigate extreme heat, wildfire, smoke and floods through resiliency centers and deploying clean energy back-up power;
- Develop new climate funding mechanisms such as climate bonds and frequent flyer fees to begin implementation by 2022 in order to generate the additional \$12-20 billion of investments required annually over the next decade to fund urgent climate action, leveraging private funding opportunities whenever possible.

### **About The Climate Center**

[The Climate Center](#) is a 501(c)(3) climate and energy policy organization working collaboratively to enact the bold policies required by science to reverse the climate crisis. Our mission is speed and scale greenhouse gas reduction starting in California. The Climate Center is best known for its pivotal role in the dramatic growth of Community Choice Energy agencies from just two five years ago to 21 agencies today serving 88% clean energy to over 11 million Californians.

*\*Net-negative emissions: sequestration of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere greater than new greenhouse gases emitted (e.g., 80% below 1990 levels or 86 MMT of emissions by 2030 coupled with 100 MMT of CO<sub>2</sub>e additional sequestered annually by 2030 resulting in -14 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e and the start of additional drawdown over time as required by science to secure a climate-safe future).*

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