



**Our mission**

Deliver rapid greenhouse gas reductions at scale, starting in California.

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March 9, 2021

Senator Ben Hueso, Chair  
Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee  
State Capitol, Room 4035  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 31, The Decarbonization Programs Act (Cortese) – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Hueso:

I am writing on behalf of The Climate Center in support of SB 31. A just transition to zero-emission buildings is critical to California achieving net-negative emissions and a climate-safe, equitable future.

The State Air Resources Board finds that California's building energy use accounts for almost 25 percent of our statewide GHG emissions. In 2016, California's building stock was responsible for directly emitting 37 million metric tons of greenhouse gases.

Because one third of California's 2045 building stock will be built between now and 2045, decarbonizing newly constructed buildings is key to reaching the state's greenhouse gas reduction targets of achieving 40% below our 1990 emissions levels by 2030 and carbon neutrality followed by net-negative emissions by 2045.

In general, all-electric "decarbonized" buildings cost less to build to code than those requiring additional gas infrastructure. They also enhance indoor and outdoor air quality, reduce safety risks associated with gas, and improve public health in all of California's communities. Pollution is already inequitably impacting our low-income and frontline communities. Eliminating gas infrastructure from homes will guarantee that the indoor air quality in these communities will be free of toxins.

Electrifying our building stock also has the added benefit of job creation as it produces a new demand for skilled workers. One [UCLA study](#) revealed that electrifying 100% of California's building stock by 2045 could generate over 100,000 full-time equivalent jobs.

Energy efficiency programs administered by the California Energy Commission (CEC) and the state's investor-owned utilities, such as the Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) program, provide resources and funding for the development and adoption of new clean energy solutions. However, building decarbonization technologies and projects are not currently eligible for these programs.

SB 31 would require the CEC, under the EPIC program, to award funds for

projects that will benefit electricity ratepayers and lead to the development and deployment of commercial and residential building decarbonization technologies and investments. SB 31 also allows the CEC to expend federal funding on projects for existing and new building decarbonization.

When SB 31 comes to your committee, we urge you to support the bill with an “aye” vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ellie Cohen', with a long, sweeping underline.

Ellie Cohen  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Climate Center

cc:

Members of the Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Communications  
Senator Dave Cortese