

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water

Testimony in Support of SB 582- Climate Emergency Mitigation, Safe Restoration, and Just Resilience Act of 2021

April 27, 2021 Hearing

Members:

Senator Henry I. Stern (Chair)
Senator Brian W. Jones (Vice Chair)
Senator Benjamin Allen
Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman
Senator Shannon Grove
Senator Robert M. Hertzberg
Senator Ben Hueso
Senator John Laird
Senator Monique Limón

Good morning Chair Laird and members of the committee.

My name is Ellie Cohen, CEO of The Climate Center, a policy nonprofit working for rapid greenhouse gas reductions at scale. I am honored to testify in support of SB 582, a science-based bill that will codify the first ever statutory goal to achieve net negative emissions- removing more climate pollution than we emit- by 2035, essential for securing an equitable, climate-safe future for all.

- It has been nearly three years since UN scientists concluded that we must cut emissions in half by 2030 while also removing our previous climate pollution from the atmosphere.
- Studies now show that the climate is worsening much faster and that we will pass the 1.5C threshold of dangerous warming *within* the decade, much earlier than the UN projected.
- California is already in the early stages of a severe multi-decade drought threatening our agricultural economy, communities and environment with dust-bowl-like conditions.
- SB 582 recognizes the urgent need to accelerate timelines, retake our climate leadership as an example for our country and the world, and move quickly and equitably, while engaging locally and prioritizing frontline communities.
- By setting an ambitious target to hit net negative emissions in just over a decade, SB 582 also sends major market signals that California is THE place in which to invest their dollars.
- These investments will drive job and economic growth for the state in sectors ranging from clean energy and manufacturing to zero emissions transportation and regenerative agriculture, while also netting numerous benefits, from job creation and improved health associated with breathing clean air to replenished groundwater and food security.
- We strongly recommend prioritizing natural sequestration in this bill and distinguishing that from nascent direct air carbon capture technologies, which should only be

advanced if there is evidence of no negative impacts on neighboring communities and the environment.

With rapidly worsening climate change impacts, California must significantly accelerate emissions reductions and make major investments in scaling up nature-based sequestration now. SB 582 is major step forward to protect our collective future, ensure the health and well-being of all of our communities --and our environment, and advance new climate-friendly economic opportunities. For these reasons, we at The Climate Center thank Senator Stern for his urgently-needed climate leadership and respectfully request your support of SB 582. Thank you.