



April 5, 2021

Senator Ben Allen
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol, Room 4203
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 582 (Stern) - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Allen:

We write to express our support for SB 582, which will establish the first net negative emissions target in state law.

The climate crisis is the existential threat of our time and one that is very immediate. At a press conference held during the height of the 2020 record-breaking wildfire season, Governor Newsom observed that “this is a damn climate emergency... Our goals are inadequate to the reality we’re experiencing.” Numerous studies conducted in the years since the release of the 2018 United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) back the Governor’s assertion and have found that “[w]e have underestimated the risks of unleashing irreversible changes... The next decade is our

window¹.” In a newly released paper², Professor Dan Kammen, the Chair of UC Berkeley’s Energy and Resources Group, agrees that “long an innovator in this arena, California is falling behind in its climate leadership and would benefit economically and ecologically, and in terms of social justice, by establishing more aggressive totals that enable a carbon-negative economy.”

With the Biden administration making climate a centerpiece of its policy agenda and preparing to push for a \$2 trillion infrastructure package that has a strong focus on clean technologies and climate justice, it is time for California to step up and reclaim its leadership in this arena. SB 582 does exactly that by establishing the first-ever statutory goal for the state to achieve net-negative emissions with a target date of 2035 and by requiring a Just Resilience Plan by 2022.

These urgently needed goals draw from a proud lineage of ambitious environmental policy measures, from the establishment of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to combat air pollution and the adoption of the Renewable Portfolio Standard, to the passage of SB 100 in 2018.

SB 582’s net negative emissions goal cannot come soon enough as post-IPCC 1.5C report studies have determined that nine of fifteen global climate tipping points have been activated³, we will pass the 1.5C threshold of dangerous warming within the next decade⁴, and California is already in the early stages of a severe multi-decade drought⁵.

The goals set forth in SB 582 will act as a catalyst for taking the actions needed to find a better future. Beyond re-establishing California as the preeminent leader in the fight against climate change and the race to achieve net negative emissions, SB 582 will send a strong market signal to the technology developers who are working on the next generation of advancements that will be needed to turn those goals into reality. From renewable energy generation and storage to zero-emission vehicles to leveraging natural and working lands for carbon sequestration, California will need a robust suite of strategies, tactics, and technologies to achieve its goals. SB 582 makes clear to the developers of those technologies, and the capital markets that back them, that California is ready to double down on the market for clean technologies and provide them the assurances they need to continue to make these critical investments. In doing so, SB 582 also blazes a policy trail that can be emulated and followed by leaders across the world.

In addition, SB 582 would require the Office of Policy and Research in collaboration with the Energy Commission, State Building Standards Commission, Infrastructure and Development Bank, the State Treasurer, Labor & Workforce Development Agency, and Department of Technology, to develop a Just Resilience Plan, by June 1, 2022, to drive resilience investments in the most vulnerable communities in California.

¹ Lenton, Rockstrom, Gaffney, Rahmstorf, Richardson, Steffen, Schyellnhuber. Nature, Nov 27 2019 <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03595-0>

² Kammen et al. Accelerating the timeline for climate action in California. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2103.07801>

³ Lenton, Rockstrom, Gaffney, Rahmstorf, Richardson, Steffen, Schyellnhuber. Nature, Nov 27 2019 <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03595-0>

⁴ Xu, Y. et al. [Global warming will happen faster than we think](#). Nature, vol. 564 | 30-32

⁵ The western U.S. is locked in the grips of the first human-caused megadrought, study finds <https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2020/04/16/southwest-megadrought-climate-change/>

With limited time remaining to avert a full on climate catastrophe, California must take courageous and bold action and pass SB 582 into law. Doing so will not only re-establish the state as the international climate leader but will also galvanize the private sector to redouble its efforts to develop the technologies and make the required investments needed to avoid the worst outcomes of climate change.

We applaud Senator Stern for putting forward such a bold and ambitious bill and, for the reasons above, stand in proud support of SB 582 and respectfully request your “AYE” vote.

Sincerely,

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The Climate Center

Richard Schorske
Executive Director
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CC: Members, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
CC: Senator Henry Stern