



Our mission

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

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September 10, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 27 (Skinner) – Signature Request

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of our thousands of supporters across the state, **The Climate Center respectfully requests your signature for SB 27**, which will advance the state's efforts to combat climate change by directing the Air Resources Board to establish the state's first-ever carbon removal targets, calling on the Natural Resources Agency to establish the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, and requiring the development a registry of carbon sequestering natural and working lands projects that are seeking private or public funding.

The Climate Center, a climate and energy policy nonprofit, works for rapid greenhouse gas reductions at scale through our Climate-Safe California campaign, which aims to accelerate state climate policy timelines and achieve net-negative emissions by 2030.

The existential threat posed by climate change is well-known and is rapidly accelerating its pace. The recent release of the Sixth Assessment Report from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was called "nothing less than a code red for humanity" by the UN Secretary-General, with scientists sounding the alarm that changes are being observed in every region and across the whole climate system. Nowhere is this more evident than in California, where we have been subject to near constant wildfires, heat waves, and threatened electricity outages for months on end. With the state in the early phases of a multi-decadal drought made severe by climate change, it has never been clearer that the time for accelerated climate action is now.

There is a narrow window in which we can act to limit further damage and removing carbon from the atmosphere will be a critical tool in that effort. Fortunately, effective carbon sequestration solutions exist today. A 2020 report by Lawrence Livermore National Labs concluded that carbon sequestration on natural and working lands can be among the least expensive ways to mitigate climate change. Land-based carbon sequestration projects like healthy soils agricultural practices including compost application and silviculture as well as habitat restoration (e.g., riparian, coastal wetland and montane meadows), and sustainable forestry management, use nature's own processes to pull carbon out of the atmosphere and store it for extended periods of time.

These natural systems also help communities be more resilient to drought, wildfire, and other extremes—a benefit that is critically important as California is currently in the early stages of a severe multi-decadal drought.

SB 27 will support the development of natural and working lands sequestration projects in a variety of ways. In a remarkable step forward, the bill directs the Air Resources Board in its Scoping Plan process to establish the first-ever target for carbon dioxide removal by 2030, with strong consideration for the role of natural and working lands. Adoption of this target will represent a landmark policy achievement in the climate space that will be replicable in other jurisdictions.

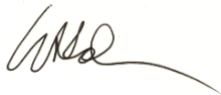
To inform that process, SB 27 will require the Natural Resource Agency to develop a bold Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy to explore how to leverage natural and working lands to the benefit of both climate mitigation and adaptation in California. The development of this strategy is critical, as managing natural and working lands for sequestration provides numerous co-benefits including enhanced soil water holding capacity, aquifer replenishment, air quality, biodiversity, food security, job creation, and resilience.

Finally, SB 27 will require the Natural Resources Agency to establish a registry of carbon sequestration projects seeking potential public and private investment and requires the Agency to track carbon benefits of these projects. The Climate Center supports initiatives such as this that have the potential to catalyze innovation and channel market forces resulting in climate-friendly choices available to everyone, from farmers to consumers.

The IPCC's report makes clear that the climate crisis is here now and must be tackled immediately. To lessen the crisis and its deadly, costly impacts, every tool available must be put to use to reduce emissions and capture the carbon that has already been released while slowing down further carbon loss and reducing the impacts of increasing extremes. Healthier natural and working lands will reduce the impacts of climate change on our communities, our economy and our health.

For these reasons, The Climate Center supports SB 27 (Skinner) and respectfully requests your signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EMC', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Ellie M. Cohen
Chief Executive Officer
The Climate Center

CC: The Honorable Nancy Skinner