



The Honorable Gavin Newsom
 Governor
 State of California

October 13, 2021

Re: Request to Support Strong Agency Action to follow the Governor’s announcement accelerating action on climate

Dear Gov. Gavin Newsom,

Thank you for [directing](#) the Air Resources Board to evaluate strategies for achieving carbon neutrality by 2035, and for [committing](#) to accelerate California’s transition to 100% clean energy this decade. These directives are important steps in acknowledging the urgency of the climate crisis — but more concrete and specific action is needed to deliver the reductions in climate-warming carbon emissions our state desperately needs.

It’s clear that California’s current climate targets are wholly inadequate to address the scale of the crisis that is unfolding. This was true a year ago, when you described the crisis as a “climate damn emergency” and promised to accelerate our targets, and it is even more true today.

The blistering June heat wave that took [hundreds of lives in the Northwest](#), [damaged this year’s crops](#), and killed more than a [billion sea creatures](#) is just one of many climate-fueled disasters we’ve seen over the past several months. In July, Death Valley experienced the [hottest 24 hours](#)

[on record](#), averaging a sweltering 118 degrees. Meanwhile, a “megadrought” across the West is impacting food production, energy resiliency, and ecosystems, while fueling a wildfire season that’s on track to be California’s worst yet. And, on the first of October an oil pipeline failed, spilling 134,000 gallons of crude oil into the ocean and creating an oil slick in the Pacific larger than Santa Monica threatening both marine and human communities.

The extreme climate impacts that we are experiencing today were not [forecast by climate scientists](#) to occur for decades — and it’s time that we adjusted our targets to reflect the urgency of this new reality. To that end, the organizations below support accelerating California’s carbon neutrality goal to 2035 — and taking immediate action across sectors to put our state on a pathway to achieving this target.

In advance of COP 26 this November in Glasgow, we recommend these measures that the state should immediately take up to meaningfully respond to the climate crisis and engage in the global discussion surrounding it.

Please direct the state’s agencies to implement the following policy actions now. These are critical steps that are needed to support California in meeting an accelerated decarbonisation target:

- **California Public Utilities Commission:**

- Regulators should set a binding target of 100% clean electricity sales by 2030.
 - The city of Los Angeles is proving that an affordable and accelerated transition to clean energy is possible by moving to 98% clean energy by 2030.
 - A broad range of stakeholders agree that California’s current target of 38 MMT is not nearly stringent enough — and risks endangering our current climate targets. We must eliminate all GHG emissions from the power sector by 2030.
- Regulators must implement a solar metering policy that will ensure that rooftop solar continues to grow in California.
 - To achieve 100% clean electricity by 2030, California will need all the clean energy that we can produce. Rooftop solar minimizes disruption to open space and can be deployed more quickly than other clean energy. You must ensure that new policies do not jeopardize the growing rooftop solar and storage with sudden changes to the solar marketplace. Please also increase battery accessibility, so that more communities can benefit from solar with storage.
- Regulators must end subsidies for new fossil fuel appliances in homes and buildings and instead direct these subsidies to clean electric appliances that can run on 100% clean energy.
 - Ratepayer-funded rebates for new gas appliances that will continue to pollute for decades amounted to [\\$81 million last year](#). California should only be subsidizing the clean technologies of the future.

- Ratepayer subsidies for new gas hookups amount to an estimated [\\$100 million](#) annually. The CPUC must proceed with plans to phase out these subsidies for fossil fuel infrastructure.
 - Regulators must ensure that PG&E's plan to underground thousands of miles of power lines targets only the highest fire risk lines and does not dramatically impact the affordability of clean electricity.
 - Ensuring that clean electricity is affordable is essential to transitioning our transportation systems and homes off of fossil fuels. Wildfire mitigation strategies like undergrounding power cables must be funded using mechanisms that will not burden low-income ratepayers that are least able to shoulder these costs - and that will not impede the transition off of fossil fuels.
 - Regulators in partnership with CAISO must evaluate the reasonableness of expanding transmission capacity before lines are undergrounded - a key step to ensure that communities can receive enough clean electricity to electrify their homes, cars and trucks.
- **California Air Resources Board:**
 - Regulators should phase out the sale of new gas-burning cars and light trucks by 2030.
 - Since new cars stay on the road for twenty years or longer, we must stop new internal combustion car sales as quickly as possible.
 - Regulators should require auto makers to reduce emissions 7% annually — a target that is stronger than President Obama's rules and that will help make up for lost time from the Trump rollback.
 - Regulators should adopt aggressive, comprehensive truck rules.
 - Trucks represent only 4% of the units on the road in the state, but 28% of the emissions. Critical rules, which have been [proposed to CARB by the Advanced Clean Fleet \(ACF\) Coalition](#), must be approved, to accelerate achievement of carbon neutrality by 2035.
 - In accordance with new direction from SB27, and in partnership with the Natural Resources Agency, establish an aggressive carbon sequestration target for the state's natural and working lands.
 - Research shows that the 25 MMT CO₂e of sequestration on NWL referenced in the bill text is well below the technical limits of California soils.
 - Given the affordability of nature-based sequestration compared to other forms of carbon dioxide removal, and given the numerous co-benefits to water security, drought resilience, and wildfire mitigation, the NWL target CARB sets should be as high as 100 MMT CO₂e annually. In conjunction with climate mitigation, nature-based sequestration also provides [benefits](#) to low-income and disadvantaged communities.
- **California Energy Commission:**

- The California Energy Commission must phase out all gas interconnections in new homes and buildings in the 2025 code cycle.
 - The CEC's 2022 building code takes important steps to incentivize clean electric heat pumps in buildings—a key step that will also increase resiliency and access to cooling during heat waves—but stronger action is needed to ensure that all new homes and buildings statewide are built to run on 100% clean energy.
- **California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM):**
 - Regulators must immediately enact a 3,200-foot health and safety buffer between fossil-fuel infrastructure and homes, schools, and other sensitive sites.
 - Communities of color disproportionately suffer the devastating health impacts from fossil fuel extraction. A 3,200 foot buffer zone is the bare minimum needed to keep families safe from toxic pollution.
 - Regulators must immediately halt permitting of any new oil and gas extraction, fossil fuel infrastructure or petrochemical plants.
 - Directing the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to [analyze pathways](#) to phase out oil extraction across the state by no later than 2045 was an important step in the right direction - but a faster timeline is needed to meet accelerated carbon neutrality goals.
 - Regulators must pursue an accelerated phase-out of all fossil fuel production with a just and equitable transition that protects workers, communities, and economies.
 - The recent decisions to cancel over 60 [fracking leases](#) on the basis of climate change is a good start - but far more urgent action is needed to begin winding down fossil fuel extraction.
- **California Natural Resources Agency:**
 - In accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-82-20 and the passage of SB27, and in partnership with the Air Resources Board, include aggressive carbon sequestration targets in the recently released Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy [draft](#) for public comment.
- **California Department of Transportation:**
 - Regulators must incentivize cities to build out networks of protected bike lanes that are safe for people 8 to 80 years old.
 - Regulators must incentivize cities to build out networks of red-painted bus lanes that prioritize buses over private cars.
 - Regulators must redirect funds from road-widening projects to projects to improve transit and active transportation along corridors.

With these actions, you can cement your legacy as a global leader on climate in this key moment. There is still time to stave off the worst impacts of the climate crisis — but we must act now to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy, while reversing the buildup of greenhouse gases that is already in the atmosphere.

Sincerely,

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