



Our mission

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

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January 11, 2022

Honorable Kevin McCarty
California State Assemblymember, District 7
State Capitol P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0007

AB 1218 – SUPPORT-IF-AMENDED

Dear Assemblymember McCarty:

On behalf of The Climate Center and its thousands of statewide supporters, I write to express our deep appreciation that you have introduced AB 1218, a bill that will codify Governor Newsom’s September 2020 Executive Order setting 2035 as the final year that California will register gasoline-powered vehicles. Our support, however, is conditional on amendments being accepted that will move the final year to at least 2030 if not earlier.

The Climate Center is a California nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 2001 with a mission to deliver rapid greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions at scale, starting in California. We have long held that deep transformations in the transportation sector are necessary in order to achieve California’s climate goals. Phasing out gasoline-powered vehicles is an important part of that transformation.

As confirmed in the 2020 Executive Order, “the climate crisis is happening now, impacting California in unprecedented ways, and affecting the health and safety of too many Californians. We must accelerate our actions to mitigate climate change, and move more quickly toward our low-carbon, sustainable and resilient future.”¹ We couldn’t agree more.

Since the Executive Order was issued, the climate crisis has only grown worse. It’s “Code Red” for humanity per the UN Secretary General. “The evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse gas emissions are choking our planet & placing billions of people in danger. We must act decisively now to avert a climate catastrophe,” he said.² The past seven years were the hottest on record,³ with sea levels set to be at their highest yet.⁴ There have been twenty weather disasters each of which cost at least \$1 billion in the U.S.,⁵ and over the past five years, “off-the-charts” weather disasters have cost \$750 billion.⁶ Here in California, the Dixie Fire became the second largest wildfire in the state’s history at nearly one million acres, adding to a long and growing list of unprecedented wildfire disasters in the state, fueled by extreme drought and our rapidly warming climate.

¹ <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/9.23.20-EO-N-79-20-Climate.pdf>

² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/08/1097362>

³ <https://climate.copernicus.eu/copernicus-globally-seven-hottest-years-record-were-last-seven>

⁴ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1104472>

⁵ <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/2021-us-climate-recap-fourth-warmest-year-record-20-billion>

⁶ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/10/weather/2021-us-billion-dollar-disasters-climate-noaa/index.html>

What all this means is that 2035 is too late. Practical and affordable electric vehicles (EVs) are becoming more available with each passing month and the state is poised to significantly expand EV charging infrastructure in the coming years. California must join other climate leaders in accelerating the date for banning gas powered car sales including the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands.⁷ The California Democratic Party also adopted a 2030 end date.⁸ Auto manufacturers have announced their own phase-outs of gasoline vehicle manufacture⁹ and although the current target years are also too late, this trend can only be expected to expand and accelerate. The state should continue its efforts to expand clean-emission transit and active mobility, prioritizing investments in lower income communities and communities of color.

This important legislation will help our state accelerate its transition to sustainable mobility and meet our current climate emissions targets, which must be accelerated to align with the most recent climate science. We urge you to amend AB 1218 such that the final year of gasoline car registration is at least 2030, not 2035.

We look forward to working with you to support a bill that is commensurate with the science and the urgency of the crisis upon us. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Ellie M. Cohen
Chief Executive Officer
The Climate Center

⁷ <https://www.coltura.org/world-gasoline-phaseouts>

⁸ <https://electrek.co/2021/09/01/ca-dems-endorse-plan-to-push-california-gas-car-ban-to-2030/>

⁹ <https://www.caranddriver.com/news/a38213848/automakers-pledge-end-gas-sales-2040/>