

#### Our Mission

We're working to rapidly reduce climate pollution at scale, starting in California.

#### Board of Directors

Susan Thomas, Chair  
Venise Curry, MD, Vice Chair  
Elliot Hinds, Treasurer  
Jean S. Fraser, Secretary  
Lokelani Devone  
Susan Longville  
Mary Luévano  
Carl Mears, PhD  
Lisa Whitescarver

#### Executive Staff

Ellie Cohen, Chief Executive Officer  
Lois Downy, Chief Financial Officer  
Jeri Howland, Director of Philanthropy  
Barry Vesser, Chief Operations Officer

#### Strategic Advisors

Peter Barnes, Co-founder, Working Assets  
Rick Brown, TerraVerde Renewable Partners  
Jeff Byron, Former CA Energy Commissioner  
Joe Como, Former Director, CA Office of Ratepayer Advocates  
Ann Hancock, Chief Strategist & Co-Founder, The Climate Center  
Hunter Lovins, President, Natural Capitalism Solutions

#### Science & Technical Advisors

Fred Euphrat, PhD  
Daniel M. Kammen, PhD  
Lorenzo Kristov, PhD  
Alexandra von Meier, PhD  
Edward C. Myers, M.S.Ch.E.  
Greg Thomson, Green Solutions & Technologies  
Mathis Wackernagel, PhD  
Ken Wells, E.I.T.  
Ai-Chu Wu, PhD

#### Contact

[theclimatcenter.org](http://theclimatcenter.org)  
1275 4th Street #191  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
707-525-1665

March 27, 2024

Honorable Senator María Elena Durazo (Chair)  
Senate Local Government Committee  
State Capitol, Room 407  
Sacramento, CA 95814

#### RE: SB-1418 Hydrogen-fueling stations: expedited review. OPPOSE

Dear Senator Durazo and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of The Climate Center and its thousands of supporters throughout California to express our opposition to SB 1418 (Archuleta) that would force local governments to commit staff time and other resources to developing a streamlined permitting process for hydrogen fueling stations.

The Climate Center is a climate and energy policy nonprofit working to rapidly reduce climate pollution at scale. We are a think tank, do tank working collaboratively for accelerated, equitable climate policy in California. We know that as goes California, so goes the world. With the climate crisis rapidly worsening, we engage in cross-sector coalitions to enact bold, science-based policy that sparks innovation and channels market forces for speed and scale greenhouse gas reductions to benefit everyone.

SB 1418 states: *"This bill would require every city, county, or city and county to adopt an ordinance that creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for hydrogen-fueling stations..."*

This bill is not good public policy for several reasons:

1. Expediting and streamlining a process that introduces a highly volatile and difficult-to-contain gas into local communities is dangerous. Decisions about flammable and in certain cases explosive gasses such as hydrogen require careful scrutiny and ample time to ensure that public health and safety is safeguarded.

2. The first order of business regarding hydrogen is to ensure that hydrogen production is socially and environmentally sound. Currently nearly all hydrogen production is not, and in fact [is based on fossil gas steam reformation](#). Deploying fueling stations to dispense dirty hydrogen is not a climate or clean energy solution.

3. With regard to light duty vehicles (passenger cars), it is now clear that battery-electric vehicles are a far superior technology compared to fuel-cell electrics. The efficiency equation alone, where battery-electrics are three times more efficient than FCEVs, is enough

to settle the issue. The fact that electricity is known and familiar to consumers and that hydrogen has many unknowns and the public is not familiar with hydrogen, and the reality that scaling up hydrogen in neighborhoods introduces new hazards makes it clear that this is not a good policy direction.

4. There are now [nearly two million](#) zero emission vehicles on California roads, most of them battery EVs. The vehicles themselves and the charging infrastructure are coming down in cost, improving, and expanding every day in terms of practicality, accessibility, and affordability. Public policy should focus on addressing challenges that remain in that technology sphere such as providing affordable charging for multi-unit dwellers. Hydrogen on the other hand, especially in the case of light duty vehicles, has never really caught on for good reasons, there are fewer than 15,000 on the road, and the trajectory in cost, affordability, and access – with regard to both vehicle and fueling – is [trending in the wrong direction](#).
5. Local governments, many strapped for resources, should be spending their precious resources on improving the quality of life in their communities by focusing on making their cities walkable and bikeable, improving public transit options, and expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure for those that must drive.

When SB 1418 comes to you for a vote, we respectfully urge your “no” vote.

Sincerely,



Ellie Cohen, Chief Executive Officer,  
The Climate Center

cc:

Committee Members:

Senator Kelly Seyarto (Vice Chair)

Senator Brian Dahle

Senator Steven M. Glazer

Senator Nancy Skinner

Senator Aisha Wahab

Senator Scott D. Wiener