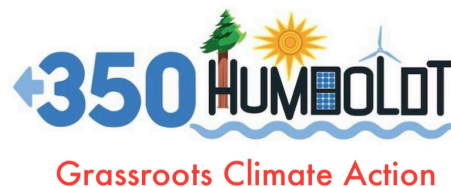




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January 8th, 2025

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo, Chair
Senate Local Government Committee
State Capitol, Room 407
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 222 (Wiener) - Heat Pump Permitting - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Durazo,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to you to express our support for SB 222 (Wiener), the Heat Pump Access Act, which will modernize permitting for heat pump installations, reducing cost and hassle for contractors and consumers alike.

California has led the nation in establishing some of the most ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and combat climate change. California's climate action plan was praised globally for its goal of achieving net neutrality by 2045, which would require slashing emissions by 85 percent, and air pollution by 71 percent. To keep pace in achieving these laudable emissions targets, California will need to convert at least 20% of existing building stock to electric appliances and install 6 million heat pumps across the state by 2030. In the absence of federal leadership on climate, these goals are more important than ever.

Additionally, heat pump installations are critical for helping households access the cooling and air filtration they need to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and poor air quality. Last summer was Earth's hottest on record. California averages 35 dangerous heat days per year. By 2050, it's expected this will rise to almost 50 dangerous days per year. However, more than a quarter of Californians currently lack cooling through very efficient, zero-emission appliances like heat pumps. In increasingly sweltering Los Angeles, 32% of residents still lack access to air conditioning at home — that's 1.26 million people in L.A. alone.

Heat pumps are highly efficient electric appliances with the capability to provide both heating and cooling in one device. Due to both increasing severity of extreme heat events, as well as the need to electrify buildings in order to meet our climate goals, California has dedicated hundreds of millions of dollars to incentive programs such as TECH Clean California and the Equitable Building Decarbonization program to support consumer adoption of heat pumps statewide. These public rebate and direct install programs require applicants to secure permits for heat pump installations to ensure work is completed according to state building codes and safety standards.

Unfortunately, interviews with heat pump installers point to a number of barriers at the local level to securing permits to install heat pump equipment, including long inspection wait times, local architectural requirements, wide variations in requirements across jurisdictions, and the need to

obtain multiple permit types for a water heater installation. The added cost of securing a permit can range from \$50 to several thousand, depending on the jurisdiction and its requirements.

SB 222, the Heat Pump Access Act, takes a comprehensive approach to standardizing the permitting process for heat pump installations statewide, reducing time constraints and lowering costs for contractors and consumers alike. SB 222 will require jurisdictions to put in place an automated permitting system for simple installations; establish guardrails around burdensome setback and noise limitations; require maximum one permit for heat pump installations; and prohibit HOAs from imposing architectural review standards that will prevent clean appliance adoption.

The streamlined process outlined under the Heat Pump Access Act will provide a more seamless experience for the residents and contractors leading the way in the clean energy transition, and maximize the impact of state dollars helping Californians access the cooling and clean air benefits of heat pumps. For these reasons, we are pleased to support SB 222.

Sincerely,

David Diaz
Executive Director
ActiveSVG

Shannon Olivieri Hovis
Chief Strategy Officer
California Environmental Voters

Bruce Hodge
Founder, Chair
Carbon Free Palo Alto
& Chair, Carbon Free Silicon Valley

Pete Marsh
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Citizens Climate Lobby Long Beach

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Janet Cox
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Ashley McClure
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Enrique Huerta
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