

March 27, 2019

Dear Governor Newsom:

We urge you to take swift and bold action to protect communities across California from the impacts of oil and gas development and climate change, which you recognize as “an existential threat.”¹ As you have noted, for the past several years, California has been ravaged by drought, fire and mudslides, and communities have experienced the harmful direct impacts of pollution from the oil and gas industry. As a candidate, you made commitments to act on these issues. Now, as governor, we urge you to act quickly. There are several actions you can take immediately to stem the harmful impacts the oil and gas industry is having on California’s people and environment. We look forward to your timely leadership on these issues.

1. Immediately stop new fossil fuel production, end the most dangerous oil and gas extraction practices, and make a plan to end all fossil fuel production in 10 years.

California is the sixth largest oil producing state in the country. If we are going to avoid the worst of climate change-supercharged disasters, we need to act quickly to stop the expansion of oil and gas production, and begin to phase out fossil fuels altogether as we transition to 100 percent renewable energy. While campaigning, you vowed to oppose “fracking and other unsafe oil operations,”² and given the threat posed to our state from climate change, there is no safe way to continue oil and gas drilling.

Nearly 8,500 active oil wells are within 2,500 feet of homes, schools and hospitals, representing 12 percent of the oil drilling in California.³ Fracking also threatens our water and seismic stability. As California scientists have shown, these operations are not safe for communities, our water, public health or the climate.⁴

We urge to you to take the following actions to limit oil and gas production:

1. Ban fracking and other related dangerous drilling like acidizing and cyclic steam;
2. Institute a moratorium on new drilling permits – we need to stop the expansion of fossil fuels;
3. Institute a 2,500 foot setback for all current drilling projects to protect homes, schools, hospitals, and water supplies;
4. Develop a plan that will phase out oil and gas production in California within 10 years, and ensure a fair and just transition for workers and communities impacted by the phase out.

1 Newsom, Gavin., “A sustainable world can start in California.” Medium. December 5, 2017. <https://medium.com/@GavinNewsom/a-sustainable-world-can-start-in-california-df8c0d1332d4>

2 Newsom Dec 5, 2017.

3 Trout, Kelly. Oil Change International. “The Sky’s Limit California, Oil Change International.” May 2018. At 8

4 Californians Against Fracking. “Top Ten Reasons Governor Brown Must Ban Extreme Oil Drilling In California.” July 31, 2015. And Long, Jane C.S. et.al.”An Independent Scientific Assessment of Well Stimulation in California.” California Council on Science and Technology. July 2015.

2. Shut down dangerous fossil fuel infrastructure.

Three years ago, Los Angeles experienced the worst gas blowout in U.S. history at the Aliso Canyon gas storage facility. The blowout poisoned the air and caused significant health impacts to the community – impacts that are still being felt to this day. Mayor Garcetti and other Los Angeles leaders have called for the facility to be shut down completely and we were heartened to hear you express interest in doing so on the campaign trail.⁵

The leak at Aliso Canyon was the largest source of climate-altering emissions in California.⁶ We can never expect to meet our goals with these sorts of catastrophic pollution incidents looming on the horizon. If we want to avoid the worst effects of climate change and protect communities, we cannot continue to invest billions of dollars in new fossil fuel infrastructure that will contribute to warming the planet. At the same time, we must shut down aging and unnecessary facilities like Aliso Canyon.

We therefore urge you to:

1. Immediately and permanently shut down the Aliso Canyon gas storage facility;
2. Institute a moratorium on any new fossil fuel infrastructure, including pipelines, power plants, refineries and export facilities.

3. Protect our water from toxic oil waste.

Not only does oil production pose a threat to community health and to our water through fracking, the waste produced also threatens our food and water. Oil wastewater is used by several water districts in the state to irrigate some crops including citrus, grapes, nuts and other foods.⁷ Oil wastewater is also routinely dumped into our aquifers in violation of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. While some of this activity has been restricted, more than 1650 wells continue to pollute our water.⁸ During your campaign, you pledged to “fight efforts by the oil and gas industry to escape the reach of state and federal regulators.”⁹

We welcome this approach and urge you to take the following action:

1. Immediately halt the practice of injecting oil wastewater into aquifers;
2. Prohibit the use of oil wastewater to irrigate crops.

4. Stop new factory farms.

The 1.7 million dairy cows, more than half a million beef cattle, 130,000 hogs, 50 million broiler chickens and 20 million egg-laying hens on factory farms in California produce as much

⁵ “Gavin Newsom fully committed to shutting down Aliso Canyon gas storage plant.” The Undercurrent. Youtube. March 5, 2018

⁶ McGrath, Matt. “California methane leak ‘largest in US history.’ BBC News. Feb 26, 2016. <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-35659947>

⁷ Harkinson, Josh. “These popular fruits and veggie brands may be grown with oil wastewater.” Mother Jones. July 24, 2015. And Schlanger, Zoe. “In California, farmers rely on oil wastewater to weather drought.” Newsweek. April 6, 2015.

⁸ Fracking and Dangerous Drilling in California Briefing Book, Californians Against Fracking, December 2017, p. 12

⁹ Newsom, Dec 5, 2017.

untreated manure as 456 million people — more than the entire U.S. population.¹⁰ This waste poses a direct threat to California’s water, air and climate. Large agricultural and fossil fuel interests advocate for methane digesters as a means of addressing serious problems caused by factory farms. Unfortunately, these digesters create more problems than they solve at factory farms, which still emit greenhouse gases and other toxic air pollutants, even with digesters.¹¹ Rather than wasting taxpayer money to subsidize a polluting industry, we must dramatically change the way we grow food in California.

We therefore urge you to:

1. Enact a moratorium on new factory farms;
2. Instruct state agencies to implement a thorough air and water monitoring program to ensure compliance with existing state and federal regulations;
3. Eliminate funding in the budget for dairy digesters;
4. Support funding to transition from factory farms to sustainable small and mid-sized farms.

5. Develop a plan for a fair and just transition to 100 percent clean, renewable energy in California by 2030.

If we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change, the science is clear: We have only about a decade to transition to 100 percent renewable energy. We appreciate your campaign pledge that, “On day one, I will issue a directive putting California on a clear path to 100 percent renewable energy.”¹² But the substance of this promise is critical. California should have a plan to move off of fossil fuels by 2030, in line with science and national calls for a Green New Deal. At the same time, the plan should ensure that renewable energy is truly clean and renewable — solar, wind, geothermal, and existing hydroelectric — and not polluting. The plan must not include nuclear power, bio gas, biomass, or other dirty energy sources. The plan must provide for a fair and just transition for workers and impacted communities. This includes resources to support the development of renewable energy in low-income communities, as well as programs to transition the state’s existing fossil fuel workforce and those in underserved communities to well-paying jobs in the clean energy sector.

We urge you to:

1. Direct the CARB and CPUC and other relevant state agencies to jointly develop a plan that will eliminate fossil fuel use in the state and replace it with 100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2030;
2. Direct the Department of Labor to develop a plan to build the clean energy workforce necessary to achieve the transition to 100 percent clean, renewable energy, with a focus on those working in the fossil fuel industry and underserved communities;
3. Ensure all renewable energy projects are done under project labor agreements or by workers paid a prevailing wage.

¹⁰ Database: Food & Water Watch Analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture Census data at the state and county level from 1997, 2002 and 2007 for beef and dairy cattle, hogs, broiler meat chickens and egg-laying operations. Available at: <https://www.nass.usda.gov/AqCensus/>

¹¹ Frame, Dennis. Discovery Farm. “Anaerobic digesters and methane production.” UW Extension, UW Madison. At 2.

¹² Newsom, Dec 5, 2017.

As governor, you have broad regulatory authority to take all of these actions. Adopting such a platform is ambitious, but it is also what is required to avoid worsening climate change-supercharged disasters. It would also put California at the top and clearly out in front as *the* leading state on climate change. While other states like New York and Maryland have banned fracking, no governor has yet taken the bold action necessary to rise to the crisis we face.

As our new governor, you have an opportunity to provide this leadership not just for California, but for the nation. Know that we are here, ready to support you in taking the actions necessary to protect our communities and our climate.

Sincerely,

National and Statewide Organizations

350.org

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

Americans Against Fracking

ANSWER Coalition

Breast Cancer Action

California for Progress

California Indian Environmental Alliance (CIEA)

California Nurses Association

Californians Against Fracking and

Dangerous Drilling

Center for Environmental Health

Center for Food Safety

Climate Hawks Vote

The Climate Mobilization

CODEPINK

Courage Campaign

Earthworks

Family Farm Defenders

Friends of the Earth US

Food & Water Watch

Green America

Greenpeace

Mothers Out Front

National Family Farm Coalition

Organic Consumers Association

Other 98%

People Demanding Action

Progressive Democrats of America

Rainforest Action Network

Rootskeeper

Stand.earth

Local Organizations

1000 Grandmothers for Future Generations

350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley

350 Santa Barbara

350 Santa Cruz/Santa Cruz Climate Action Network

350 South Bay Los Angeles

Aliso Canyon Community Action Committee

Allesandro Coalition for Educational Justice

American Indian Movement Southern California

American Legion Post 6

Americans for Democratic Action, Southern California Chapter

Association of Irrigated Residents

Azul

Ballona Institute

California Kids IAQ
Chico 350
Coalition For A Safe Environment
Community Dreams
CRSP at Los Angeles Eco-Village
Divest LA
Earth Day Los Angeles
East Yard Communities for Environmental
Justice
EMERGE
Environmental and Climate Justice EJ/CJ
Hub, UCSB
Environmental Health Trust
Families for Earth Rights
Feminists in Action Los Angeles (Formerly
Indivisible CA 34 Womens)
Fresnans against Fracking
Greenaction for Health and Environmental
Justice
Ground Game LA
Hippo Works
Hollywood NOW
Hunger Action Los Angeles
Idle No More SF Bay Chapter
Indivisible CA-43
Indivisible Ventura
Kern Family Farm
LA Pachamama Alliance
La Union Hace La Fuerza
Local Clean Energy Alliance
Long Beach 350
Mixteco/Indígena Community Organizing
Project (MICOP)
MLK Coalition of Greater Los Angeles
MOVI, Money Out Voters In
NAACP San Pedro-Wilmington Branch #
1069
No Coal in Oakland
Northeast Valley Green Alliance
Our Revolution Contra Costa
Our Revolution East Bay
Our Revolution Gold Coast
Our Revolution Long Beach
PDA-CA
Preserve Wild Santee

Protect Monterey County
Revolution LA
ri-City Ecology Center
Sacramento Climate Action
San Benito Rising
San Fernando Valley Young Democrats
San Jose Peace and Justice Center
San Pedro & Peninsula Homeowners
Coalition
SanDiego350
Santa Barbara Standing Rock Coalition
Save Porter Ranch
SLO 350
SoCal 350 Climate Action
St. Philomena Social Justice Ministry
Stewards of the Earth
Stop Fracking Long Beach
Sunflower Alliance
Sunrise Joshua Tree
Sunrise Movement Central Coast
Sunrise Movement Los Angeles
Sunrise Movement Orange County
Sunrise Movement San Diego
System Change Not Climate Change Santa
Barbara [SCNCC SB]
The 5 Gyres Institute
The Climate Mobilization-Santa Barbara
County Chapter
The Indivisibles of Sherman Oaks
the Network of Spiritual Progressives
The Resistance - Northridge, Indivisible
The River Project
Tri-Valley CAREs
Unrig LA
Valley Scene Magazine
Van Nuys Neighborhood Council
Ventura Climate Hub 350
Ventura County Activists for Bernie Sanders
2020
Voters For Environmental Responsibility
Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club
West Berkeley Alliance for Clean Air and
Safe Jobs
West LA Democratic Club
Wilmington Improvement Network

Women For: Orange County

Xun Biosphere Project