

September 24, 2025

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

We are writing as organizations and leaders representing millions of Americans across the country to urge you to live up to your climate and consumer protection rhetoric in the face of Trump's assault on our climate. Now is not the time to step back, rather we need your strong leadership in taking on the fossil fuel industry and ushering in a clean energy future.

Prior to Trump's election, you had staked out a strong position around the need to protect consumers and communities from fossil fuel industry abuses in California and advance renewable energy. While California still had a long way to go, you had advanced several notable efforts – specifically:

- Advocating for a setback to protect communities from fossil fuel drilling: You supported environmental justice-led demands for health and safety buffers between drilling and homes, schools, and other sensitive sites. Your leadership was instrumental in moving this proposal through the legislature and defeating an industry backed referendum to repeal the law.
- Banning fracking: After years of advocacy by organizations across the state, your agencies finally banned the practice.
- Taking on industry price gouging. You worked to advance legislation that aimed to stop fossil fuel companies from gouging consumers at the pump.
- Elevating the need to take on fossil fuels nationally. You used your platform to talk about the damage fossil fuel companies are doing and the need for action. You said, for example, about fossil fuel companies "They are the polluted heart of this climate crisis. They've been lying and deceiving us for decades and decades and decades. It's finally, finally time to hold Big Oil accountable." And you sued five of the world's largest oil companies, as well as the American Petroleum Institute, for 50 years of climate misinformation, deception and damage, which have cost Californians billions in health and environmental damage.

Since Trump's election in November, however, you have made several moves that give us serious cause for concern — that you appear to be backing away from aggressively taking on Big Oil and the need for a rapid transition off fossil fuels. These actions include:

- Failing to advocate in support of the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act, which seeks industry accountability for fossil fuel driven climate disasters to relieve some of the burden these companies foist on Californians with their externalized pollution costs; these companies should pay for the climate damages they have caused in California. .

California already lags behind New York and Vermont, whose Governors signed similar legislation into law.

- Spearheading legislation that would streamline permitting for new oil and gas wells in some of the most polluted parts of the state. This is especially concerning as oil and gas operations in California use energy intensive and polluting methods to exploit the state's already depleted reserves, making oil produced in California some of the dirtiest in the world.
- Failing to implement the price gouging legislation you championed. While we applauded the passage of landmark price gouging legislation, it is meaningless if your California Energy Commission fails to use its authority to penalize refiners, some of which make 97 cents per gallon in gross profit. The CEC identified inventory requirements as the best way to guard against price hikes, yet they are not using their authority to implement this simple solution.
- Flip flopping on Aliso Canyon. For years you promised to shut down this dirty polluting facility, site of the largest blowout in U.S. history. However, in December your hand picked California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) voted to approve a plan that could keep it open indefinitely.
- Granting waivers and exemptions for Sable Offshore Corp.'s bid to reopen three offshore drilling platforms and the corroded pipeline that caused the 2015 oil spill disaster in Santa Barbara.
- Promoting Big Oil interests: Your administration took the unprecedented step of searching for a buyer for the Valero refinery in Benicia, which is slated for closure in 2026, using the resources and reputation of the state government to tip the scales in favor of fossil fuels when market forces make operations unprofitable. Reporting on potential \$100M+ bailouts for the refinery are deeply concerning, as that would set an unacceptable precedent for supporting failing industries on public dollars.
- Publicly championing fossil fuel industry-backed schemes like carbon capture and storage (CCS) and hydrogen that can worsen climate impacts, increase costs for consumers and ratepayers, and extend the life of polluting projects. When CCS projects fail, people can literally begin to suffocate. And yet there are several proposed CSS projects across California. And, the production of hydrogen is very energy intensive, often relying on fossil fuel or biofuel feedstock, which negates any climate benefit, not to mention the other pollutants involved.
- Supporting refinery conversions to biofuel, which continues the legacy of pollution in over burdened communities, while perpetuating climate harms and driving up energy, transportation, and food prices.

With Trump slashing environmental protections and doing everything in his power to promote more dirty fossil fuels while attacking renewable energy, it is critical that governors provide leadership on climate. We're looking to you, Governor Newsom, as the leader of the fourth largest economy in the world to *increase* and *expand* your efforts to move the state off of fossil fuels. We're looking for bold action from the governor who said "it's finally time to hold Big Oil accountable," but instead we've observed your silence about the lead piece of legislation that would make that happen.

It's time to vigorously endorse and campaign for the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act, ensure adequate environmental and safety review of all fossil fuel projects and pipelines, stop fossil fuel expansion and shut down Aliso Canyon, reject industry schemes like CCS and hydrogen, and crack down on profiteering. Beyond, use your position as a national leader to counter Trump's assault on our climate, rally your fellow governors, and organize a resistance to this all out push for fossil fueled climate chaos. You were right when you said that Big Oil has been deceiving us for decades. It's time to expose their lies, stop their expansion in California, and make them pay for the climate chaos they are causing.

When it comes to climate, the role of Big Oil, and the need to move off fossil fuels, there is no compromising with science. We do not have decades to wait to avoid the worst of climate chaos which is already rapidly unfolding. Please – we implore you – stop the backsliding and redouble your efforts to move California off fossil fuels and show the nation that California can lead a defense of our climate in the face of Trump.

Sincerely,

350 Bay Area Action
California

Consumer Watchdog
National

350 Mass
Massachusetts

Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action
National

Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc
National

Defend Ballona Wetlands
California

Ballona Wetlands Institute
California

Dendrite Consulting LLC
National

Biofuelwatch
National

Don't Gas the Meadowlands Coalition
New Jersey

CleanEarth4Kids.org
National

Don't Waste Arizona
Arizona

Climate Justice Alliance
National

Earth Ethics, Inc.
Florida

Coastal Lands Action Network (CLAN)
California

Elders Coalition for Climate Action
National

Food & Water Watch
National

Fossil Free California
California

Fox Valley Citizens for Peace & Justice
Illinois

FracTracker Alliance
National

Green State Solutions
Iowa

Greenpeace USA
National

Mothers Rise Up
National

North American Climate, Conservation and
Environment (NACCE)
National

Ocean Conservation Research
International

Oil and Gas Action Network
National

Oil Change International
National

Peevers Consulting Services
National

Progressive Democrats of America (PDA)
National

Protect Ballona Wetlands
California

Protect Playa Now
California

PSR Arizona Chapter
Arizona

Putnam Progressives
New York

Reclaim Our Power: Utility Justice
Campaign
California

Resist the Pipeline
Massachusetts

Resource Renewal Institute
California

San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social
Responsibility
California

Save Our Illinois Land
Illinois

SEE (Social Eco Education)
California

Seven Circles Foundation
California

Sunflower Alliance
California

United Native Americans
California

Waterspirit
National