

June 27, 2020

Sacramento Mayors' Commission on Climate Change
c/o Local Government Commission
980 9th St., Suite 1700
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Chair Stausboll and Commissioners:

Please accept this letter of support for the comprehensive and innovative plan, "Achieving Carbon Zero in Sacramento and West Sacramento by 2045." Local action to transform communities is critical to assist with reaching our statewide goal of clean air for all. The Capital Region is at the forefront of local action with a plan that truly serves as a national and international model for a decarbonized future. On behalf of the California Air Resources Board (CARB), I would like to applaud your leadership to develop a plan that addresses climate change in the Capital Region while concurrently promoting public health, social equity, and economic prosperity.

I'd like to express CARB's support for all three of the key strategies outlined in the plan including: 1) built environment strategies to advance building electrification and sustainable land use, 2) mobility strategies to increase active transportation, transit, shared mobility, and zero-emission vehicles, and 3) community health and resiliency strategies to expand urban greening and forestry, sustainable food systems, and community climate resilience. These feasible, cost-effective solutions aim to reduce the largest sources of both cities' emissions from transportation, buildings, and waste.

While all of the plan components are important, I'd like to focus my comments on the strategic building electrification measures. As CARB is evaluating options to achieve statewide climate neutrality by 2045, it is clear that aggressive action is needed early on to set us on the path to meet this target. The Capital Region plan to ensure new construction is all-electric by 2023 and 25 percent of existing buildings are electrified by 2030 will support California's ability to accomplish both short-term and long-term climate and air quality targets.

Building electrification provides a low-cost, low-risk strategy to decarbonize buildings and achieve 2030 and 2050 climate goals.¹ In the Sacramento region, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) estimates that building electrification will save customers between \$400 and \$600 every year for new and existing homes, respectively. Additionally, SMUD estimates that building electrification in both low-rise and high-rise multifamily buildings is also cost-effective in the Capital Region.

¹ Mahone, A., Subin, Z., Kahn-Lang, J., Allen, D., Li, V., De Moor, G., . . . Price, S. (2018). *Deep Decarbonization in a High Renewables Future: Updated Results from the California PATHWAYS Model*. California Energy Commission.

Furthermore, pursuant to SB 1477 (Stern, Chapter 378, Statutes of 2018), the California Public Utilities Commission, in partnership with the California Energy Commission, is establishing funding programs to incentivize the electrification of new and existing buildings.

About 10 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in California are due to natural gas use in buildings,² which also produces carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides (NO_x), ultrafine particles (PM_{2.5}), and other toxic air contaminants. Gas appliances have been linked to various acute and chronic health effects, including respiratory illness, cardiovascular disease, and premature death. If all residential gas appliances in California were immediately replaced with clean electric alternatives, the reduction of outdoor NO_x and PM_{2.5} would result in hundreds fewer deaths and cases of acute and chronic bronchitis annually. These health benefits are equivalent to approximately \$3.5 billion in monetized savings over the course of one year.³

During the public meeting scheduled for Monday, June 29, 2020, I urge the Commission to adopt the plan covering a suite of aspiring and interconnected strategies for the built environment, mobility, and community health and resiliency. CARB supports the Sacramento Mayors' Commission on Climate Change in adopting the plan, which charts the course forward to put the Capital Region on track to achieve carbon zero by 2045 in a way that will accelerate social equity, economic, and health benefits.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,



Mary D. Nichols
Chair
California Air Resources Board

cc: Mayor Darrell Steinberg
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² California Air Resources Board, *California Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory: 2000 – 2017, 2019 Edition* (2019), p. 6.

³ Zhu, Y., Connolly, R., Lin, Y., Mathews, T., Wang, Z. (2020). *Effects of Residential Gas Appliances on Indoor and Outdoor Air Quality and Public Health in California*. UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.

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