

Communication from Public

Name:

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Council File No: 21-1463

Comments for Public Posting: To the Members of the Energy, Climate Change, Environmental Justice, and River Committee, On behalf of members of the Leap and RePower coalition, please find attached an organizational sign on letter in support of Council File 21-1463 regarding equitable building decarbonization, which is scheduled to be discussed at tomorrow's ECCEJR committee meeting. We appreciate your consideration of this motion, and look forward to the meeting tomorrow.

COMMUNITIES
FOR A BETTER
ENVIRONMENT
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Energy, Climate Change, Environmental Justice, and River Committee
Los Angeles City Council, LA City Hall
1 John Ferraro Council Chamber, Room 340
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sent via email

To the Members of the Energy, Climate Change, Environmental Justice, and River Committee,

Our coalition represents thousands of community members throughout the City of Los Angeles and the state of California who are committed to ensuring that efforts to address climate change and decarbonize buildings center equity and address historic environmental injustices. For too long, low-income renters and communities of color have experienced disproportionate pollution and energy burdens resulting from an energy system powered by fossil fuels. As such, “decarbonization” should be holistically defined as policies that improve the living conditions and health of impacted communities while eliminating dirty fuels, rather than merely carbon emissions reduction programs. Our coalition is thrilled that the City Council, in coordination with the Leap/Repower coalition and championed by Councilmembers Koretz, Krekorian, and Raman, recently acted by introducing a motion on December 8, 2021, to ensure interdepartmental coordination and equity in the City’s process of decarbonizing existing buildings.¹ As this motion moves toward a full Council vote, we ask for your sign on and support of our continued efforts to achieve equitable building decarbonization in the City of Los Angeles.

This motion was drafted through a collaborative process that brought together advocates representing a wide array of stakeholders including tenants, labor, communities of color, and environmental justice communities. Recognizing that buildings, which account for more than 40 percent of carbon emissions in Los Angeles,² must decarbonize to meet both state and city-wide

¹ Building Justice Through Decarbonization Motion, Council File 21-1463 (Dec. 8, 2021), <https://www.councilmemberpaulkoretz.com/sites/g/files/wph1761/files/2021-12/Building%20Justice%20Through%20Decarbonization%20.pdf>.

² LA’s Green New Deal, Sustainable City Plan p. 14 (2019), https://plan.lamayor.org/sites/default/files/pLAn_2019_final.pdf.

climate change goals, our coalition formed to safeguard against unintended consequences that may result from otherwise well-meaning climate policies, such as displacement of low-income renters and loss of jobs in vulnerable communities. For example, the costs of decarbonizing buildings where renters live and work threatens to exacerbate the unprecedented housing and homelessness crisis in Los Angeles,³ where nearly 73 percent of renters are “housing burdened” and 21 percent of renters are “energy burdened.”⁴ At the same time, building decarbonization provides an opportunity for the City to engage labor and environmental justice communities in addressing climate change and alleviating disproportionate economic and environmental burdens. In order to seize this opportunity, the City must continue developing deep democracy practices that center equity principles and robust community engagement in the design of its climate programs.

This focus on energy and economic justice in the City’s building decarbonization framework complements the bold leadership the City already has taken to address historic harms while working to combat climate change. Establishing the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office in 2019, the City became the first in the world to fund an official City Office to implement a plan for addressing climate change, and centered traditionally marginalized communities in the decision-making process through the Community Assemblies.⁵ City Councilmembers and City departments are actively engaging equity in other decarbonization policies, such as the Comprehensive Affordable Multifamily Retrofits Program,⁶ the EV Masterplan,⁷ and the recently introduced energy justice framework to electrify new buildings in LA.⁸ By supporting our coalition’s motion to center equity in the electrification of existing buildings, the City Council will continue demonstrating its legacy of leading on climate change and economic and environmental justice.

We would like to thank Councilmembers Koretz, Krekorian, and Raman and their staff for their efforts to collaborate with our coalition in achieving equitable building decarbonization, as well as the diverse coalition of advocates integral to this process. We look forward to continued

³ Kirk, Chelsea, *Los Angeles Building Decarbonization: Tenant Impact and Recommendations*, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) (Dec. 2021), https://www.saje.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/LA-Building-Decarb_Tenant-Impact-and-Recommendations_SAJE_December-2021-1.pdf.

⁴ Jovanna Rosen et al., *How Do Renters Cope with Unaffordability?*, USC Price Los Angeles Promise Zones Report Key Findings, <https://socialinnovation.usc.edu/rent-burden/>; Ariel Dreihoble et al., *How High Are Household Energy Burdens? An Assessment of National and Metropolitan Energy Burden across the United States*, American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy p. 61, <https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/u2006.pdf>.

⁵ Climate Emergency Mobilization Department, Council File 18-0054, Jan. 17, 2018, <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=18-0054>; Mayor Garcetti Launches the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office, <https://tinyurl.com/2b88dh56>.

⁶ LADWP Comprehensive Affordable Multifamily Retrofits Program, <https://tinyurl.com/2p8e6c6h>.

⁷ Council File 21-0890 (Aug. 6, 2021), https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2021/21-0890_mot_08-26-21.pdf.

⁸ Council File 22-0151 (Feb. 9, 2022), https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2022/22-0151_misc_2-9-22.pdf.

collaboration with the City Council and coordination among the City's departments to provide leadership in achieving meaningful and equitable building decarbonization in Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

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