



CENTER for BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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Life is good.

July 30, 2014

VIA Electronic Mail

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Office of Councilmember Paul Koretz
Los Angeles City Council, District 5
200 North Spring Street, Room 440
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Pass Motion ~~14-0906~~

CF#14-0907

Dear Councilmember Koretz,

On behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity (“Center”) and our 775,000 members and online activists, including our many members within the city of Los Angeles, we strongly support Motion 14-0907 calling for a citywide greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and a Department of Water & Power greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 80% below 1990 levels by 2030. The Center is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the protection of native species and their habitats through science, policy, and environmental law. The Center has long worked to combat climate change by advocating for ambitious and science-based greenhouse gas reductions. We thank you for your leadership in introducing Motion 14-0907 and urge the City of Los Angeles to pass it.

Climate disruption is the greatest challenge we face today, with threats that permeate all aspects of our society and the natural world. The climate crisis is already a life and death matter. According to the Global Humanitarian Forum, by 2009 climate change was already responsible for some 300,000 deaths, 325 million people seriously affected, and economic losses worldwide of U.S. \$125 billion every year.¹ Climate change also exacerbates health risks in already polluted areas such as Los Angeles. Rising temperatures could increase ground-level ozone,² or smog, which contributes to health problems including premature death, asthma, stroke, heart attack, and low birth weight.³ The National Climate Assessment predicts as much as 4 feet of sea-level rise and 10 degrees Fahrenheit of warming by 2100 unless deep cuts are made to carbon pollution. Climate change has been linked to the declines and losses of wildlife populations around the globe,⁴ and scientists have concluded that by 2100 as many as one in 10 species could face extinction due to climate change.⁵

Motion 14-0907 is consistent with statewide goals for greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The state of California is seeking an 80% cut below 1990 levels by 2050 in order to achieve its target of limiting temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius – increases beyond which scientists believe would precipitate catastrophic feedback cycles, though even this amount of warming will bring

devastating impacts. According to a recent report by Ecofys, a group of climate scientists, in order to have a high probability of limiting temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius we must reduce global emissions by 65-90% below 1990 levels by 2050.⁶ Industrialized countries, and heavily emitting cities such as Los Angeles, have a large role to play in that reduction. The Center thanks the City of Los Angeles for its leadership on this issue and urges the City to pass Motion 14-0907.

Sincerely,



Kassie Siegel
Senior Counsel and Director, Climate Law Institute
Center for Biological Diversity

cc (via electronic mail):

Andy Shrader
Deputy of Environmental Affairs & Sustainability
Office of Councilmember Paul Koretz

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¹ Global Humanitarian Forum, *The Anatomy of a Silent Crisis* (2009), www.eird.org/publicaciones/humanimpactreport.pdf, p.1 of pdf.

² U.S. Global Change Research Program (2014) National Climate Assessment. (6 May 2014; <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report/regions/southwest#narrative-page-17105>)

³ M. Jerrett, et al., Long-term ozone exposure and mortality. (2009). *N Engl J Med*, 360, 1085-1095

⁴ C. Parmesan, "Ecological and evolutionary responses to recent climate change". *Annual Review of Ecology Evolution and Systematics* 37:637-669, <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.ecolsys.37.091305.110100> (last visited 2/4/14); A.E. Cahill, et al., *How does climate change cause extinction?* *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* (2012) doi:10.1098/rspb.2012.1890, <http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/early/2012/10/15/rspb.2012.1890.full.pdf> (last visited 2/5/14).

⁵ I.M.D. Maclean and R.J. Wilson, *Recent ecological responses to climate change support predictions of high extinction risk*, *PNAS* (2011)108, 12337, <http://www.pnas.org/content/108/30/12337> (last visited 2/4/14), summary at <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/07/110711151457.htm> (last visited 2/5/14).

⁶ B. Hare, et al., "Below 2° C or 1.5° C depends on rapid action from both Annex I and Non-Annex I countries." (June 4, 2010), *Climate Action Tracker*, p.4