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SOCAL 350 CLIMATE ACTION
P.O. Box 50260
Los Angeles, California 90050
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March 22, 2018

Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street,
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Council File 18-0054 – Climate Emergency Mobilization Department

Dear Members of the Los Angeles City Council,

We are writing on behalf of the members of SoCal 350 Climate Action in support of Councilmembers Paul Koretz and Bob Blumenfield's Climate Emergency Mobilization Department motion.

After a year of unprecedented wildfires and devastating mudslides that have impacted communities across our City and State, a Climate Emergency Mobilization Department is urgently needed to protect the lives and well-being of our residents. The safe and just transition to ending greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate threats must include efforts to protect the lower-income and frontline communities of color that face the most vulnerabilities and bear the brunt of costs related to climate disasters.

As a coalition of individuals and groups from across Southern California committed to building a healthy climate through the joining of environmental, social and economic justice, we strongly endorse this motion for a Department empowered to build climate and resilience responses including emergency climate mitigation, resilience and adaptation programs. We applaud the Councilmembers' efforts to involve a wide array of stakeholders in a robust climate emergency education and outreach process, including social and environmental justice advocates, local labor unions, neighborhood councils, local NGO's, homeowners' associations and more.

Support – Climate Emergency Mobilization Department – SoCal 350

Our City prides itself on its climate leadership, and this motion is an urgently needed opportunity to set a powerful example pursuing a safe and just end to greenhouse gas emissions to stabilize our climate, protect our communities and build a healthier, stronger, more resilient world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Eidt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "E".

Jack Eidt

Steering Committee Member

SoCal 350 Climate Action



April 6, 2018

Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

BY
R/S
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2018 APR -6 PM 3:05

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Re: Support for Motion for the Establishment of a Los Angeles Climate Emergency Mobilization Department (Council File # 18-0054)

Dear Council President Wesson and Los Angeles City Council:

I am writing on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity (the “Center”), a nonprofit organization with over 1.6 million members and online activists, in Los Angeles and throughout the country. The Center wages innovative legal and grassroots campaigns to protect people, wildlife and ecosystems from the climate change and its catastrophic impacts. We work to eliminate greenhouse pollution and speed the just transition to 100 percent clean, renewable energy.

The Center is writing to express its strong support for an ordinance to establish America’s first Climate Emergency Mobilization Department (“CEMD”) in Los Angeles, pursuant to motion CF #18-0054 (Koretz, Blumenfield). The motion directs the Chief Legislative Analyst, Chief Administrative Officer, and Personnel Department to report back on the establishment of a Climate Emergency Mobilization Department to plan and coordinate Los Angeles’s climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience programs across departments and sectors. It would also direct City departments to report back on opportunities to radically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement climate-adaptive land use planning. It also explicitly includes the concept of a “just transition” as an essential core element. Specifically, the motion requires that frontline, low-income communities of color who have suffered the most under the extractive fossil fuel economy receive the first benefits of the climate mobilization effort, and workers displaced by the transition to a regenerative, renewable, and zero emissions economy will be prioritized for retraining and job placement in positions of equal pay.

By combining these essential elements—emergency mobilization, greenhouse gas reductions, and just transition—the motion recognizes and addresses the climate emergency in which we find ourselves. Climate change poses a significant threat to human health and well-being.¹ The health impacts of climate change include harms from rising heat stress, the increasing frequency

¹ Luber, G. et al., Ch. 9: Human Health. Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment, Melillo, J.M. et al. (eds.), U.S. Global Change Research Program, pp. 220-256 (2014); Watts, Nick et al., Health and climate change: policy responses to protect public health, 386 The Lancet 1861 (2015); USGCRP [U.S. Global Change Research Program], The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment, Crimmins, A. et al. (eds.), Washington, DC, 312 pp. (2016).

of extreme weather events, increases in air pollution, the spread of vector-borne diseases, rising food insecurity, changing exposure to toxic chemicals, displacement, and stress on mental health and well-being.² It will hit hardest our most vulnerable populations—low-income and minority communities, children, the elderly, and the sick.³ And it is already threatening all Angelenos. 2017 was the second warmest year ever recorded for the U.S., with only 2016 warmer than last year.⁴ 2017's extreme weather and climate disasters killed hundreds of Americans and cumulatively cost 306 billion dollars, making 2017 by far the costliest year on record.⁵

Los Angeles is far from immune from the effects of climate change. In this sprawling city, as well as other cities, the urban heat island effect — which is expected to strengthen as urban areas expand and become denser — will amplify climate-related warming even beyond already increases.⁶ Los Angeles will need to contend with, and adapt to, rising sea levels; global average sea level rose by seven to eight inches since 1900, and the rate of sea level rise is accelerating.⁷ Climate warming also has exacerbated the conditions contributing to recent historic droughts and western U.S. wildfires by reducing soil moisture and contributing to earlier spring melt and reduced water storage in snowpack.⁸ Our region has recently experienced such climate devastation from a prolonged historic drought, and unprecedented wildfires and mudslides.

Additionally, and of particular importance in Los Angeles, climate change is expected to increase the air pollution components that trigger asthma attacks, specifically air particulates and ozone.⁹ Nationally, projected climate-related increases in ground-level ozone concentrations in 2020 could lead to an average of 2.8 million more occurrences of acute respiratory symptoms, 944,000 more missed school days, and over 5,000 more hospitalizations for respiratory-related problems.¹⁰ These results are particularly devastating for vulnerable populations already living in areas of severe nonattainment, like Los Angeles. In 2020 alone, California—especially Los Angeles and the Central Valley—could pay an average of \$729 million (2008 \$) in health impact

²Sheffield, Perry and Philip J. Landrigan, *Global climate change and children's health: Threats and strategies for prevention*, 119 *Environmental Health Perspectives* 291 (2011); Luber, G. et al., Ch. 9: Human Health. *Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment*, Melillo, J.M. et al. (eds.), U.S. Global Change Research Program, pp. 220-256 (2014); Watts, Nick et al., *Health and climate change: policy responses to protect public health*, 386 *The Lancet* 1861 (2015); USGCRP [U.S. Global Change Research Program], *The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment*, Crimmins, A. et al. (eds.), Washington, DC (2016).

³ USGCRP [U.S. Global Change Research Program], *The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment*, Crimmins, A. et al. (eds.), Washington, DC (2016).

⁴ National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA], *Long-term warming trend continued in 2017: NASA, NOAA, Release 18-003* (January 18, 2018), <https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/long-term-warming-trend-continued-in-2017-nasa-noaa>

⁵ NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information [NCEI], *U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters* (2018), <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/>.

⁶ *Id.* at 17.

⁷ USGCRP 2017 at 339.

⁸ *Id.* at 231.

⁹ A.S. Bernstein and S. S. Myers, *Climate Change and Children's Health*, *CURRENT OPINION IN PEDIATRICS* 23:221–6 (2011).

¹⁰ Union of Concerned Scientists, *Rising Temperatures and Your Health: Rising Temperatures, Worsening Ozone Pollution* (2011), https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/legacy/assets/documents/global_warming/climate-change-and-ozone-pollution.pdf.

costs associated with climate-related increases in ozone.¹¹

Such potential devastation and harm requires a full-scale mobilization in response. As the Trump administration continues to roll back existing environmental protections and attacks California's landmark vehicle emissions standards, cities have emerged as a last hope for true leadership in this effort. By taking full responsibility for our substantial climate impacts, and actively leading a full-scale climate mobilization, Los Angeles can inspire a much more rapid and broader movement among cities around the country and around the globe. The CEMD would take responsibility for catalyzing this response and show global leadership on the most important issues of our time.

Given the devastation of the recent drought, wildfires, and mudslides, it is imperative the CEMD be established and operating this year. Therefore, we urge the City Council to vote swiftly to fund it *within this city budget cycle*.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,



Maya Golden-Krasner
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(213) 785-5402

¹¹ UCS [Union of Concerned Scientists], *Rising Temperatures and Your Health: Rising Temperatures, Worsening Ozone Pollution* (2011).