



DATE: April 13, 2018

TO: The Honorable Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti  
The Honorable Herb Wesson, City Council President  
The Honorable Nury Martinez, Chair of the Energy, Climate Change & Environmental Justice Committee  
All City Council Members

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

The above organizations representing the Green LA Coalition write to express our strong support for the creation of a Climate Emergency Mobilization Department (CEMD) to plan and coordinate critical climate mitigation and adaptation strategies across all city departments.

Los Angeles is experiencing longer heat waves, persistent drought, unprecedented wildfires, increased flood risk and debris flows, and impending sea level rise. These climate threats require an emergency response.

UCLA estimates that by 2050, downtown Los Angeles could experience 22 days of temperatures over 95 degrees each year. The USGS projects an ARkStorm scenario like that of 1861 could generate losses three times greater than the largest possible earthquake and has an equal probability of occurring.

Moody's, who play a significant role in determining bond ratings, has adopted a new policy that requires communities facing such climate threats demonstrate that they're taking action to mitigate these risks or pay a higher rate of interest. NOAA estimates that climate-related disasters cost the US \$306B in 2017 alone. Studies from the World Bank and others have determined that every \$1 invested in pre-disaster mitigation and adaptation saves \$6 in disaster costs.

While the City has developed goals for sustainability and resilience, we need a mechanism to mobilize citywide to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement meaningful climate-adaptive land use planning. The proposed CEMD would focus, synthesize and drive sustained action on all fronts. These actions must ensure that low-income communities of color who have been disproportionately impacted and are at most risk are prioritized in practice.

In order to increase public transparency and awareness of these efforts, we encourage the city to include greenhouse gas impact statements in all Council motions, much as it currently includes fiscal impact statements.

Further, the Department should receive guidance and oversight from scientists and community leaders to ensure effective actions, just programs, and accountability.

We urge the full City Council to act decisively to establish and fund this proposed department within this budget cycle.

As Green LA, we believe this motion creates a timely opportunity for the City to ensure a climate-resilient future for all Angelenos.

Sincerely,

Damon Nagami, Natural Resources Defense Council

Tori Kjer, Trust for Public Land

Melanie Winter, The River Project

Meredith McCarthy, Heal the Bay

Pam Berstler, Green Gardens Group