

The ECO Report



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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE URGES MAYOR FAULCONER TO FINALIZE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

JULY 25, 2014 | ROY L HALES | LEAVE A COMMENT

San Diegans ask for clean energy, public transit to address climate change

From Jo Communciations

SAN DIEGO, July 23, 2014— Today, San Diego City Council's Environment Committee passed a resolution urging Mayor Faulconer to reduce pollution and prepare San Diego for the impacts of climate change by finalizing the City of San Diego's draft Climate Action Plan, which Council President Todd Gloria released the draft plan during his tenure as Interim Mayor. Of the four Environment Committee members, Councilmembers David Alvarez, Marti Emerald and Ed Harris voted in favor of the resolution. Councilmember Lorie Zapf voted in opposition.

An overflowing crowd of community residents and organizations, including the American Lung Association San Diego Chapter, Environmental Health Coalition, San Diego Coastkeeper and San Diego 350, spoke in support of the resolution which urges Mayor Faulconer to immediately advance an aggressive Climate Action Plan with strategies to measurably reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the next 20 years and comply with state policy and the City's General Plan.

Points from the resolution include:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent by 2020 and 49 percent by 2035
- Achieve 100 percent clean energy by 2035
- Reduce energy demand in existing buildings
- Increase use of public transit, walking and bicycling to 50 percent of commutes
- Prioritize investment in economically disadvantaged communities;
- Increase urban parks and forests
- Maximize support of local, quality middle-class jobs that make our community healthier
- Bolster resilience of local infrastructure, public health, and natural resources against climate change impacts

“San Diego is already experiencing the impacts of climate change—from the recent droughts and wildfires, to the health impacts of heat waves and air pollution – and these impacts disproportionately burden low-income neighborhoods,” said Kayla Race, policy advocate at Environmental Health Coalition and member of the City’s Economic and Environmental Sustainability Task Force.

“We can’t afford to delay climate action any longer. We’re calling on Mayor Faulconer to deliver an aggressive climate action plan now and start creating real results and positive change for all San Diegans.”

Through dozens of public meetings over nearly four years of the plan’s development, the public and the Task Force— comprised of representatives from business, the environment, energy, the building industry, community and the Navy— continually stressed the importance of taking aggressive, enforceable and local action now to prepare for climate change and reduce pollution.

“Last year, my committee heard from Scripps Institution of Oceanography Professor Keeling that we have a small window of opportunity to slow climate change,” said Councilmember and Environment Committee Chair David Alvarez. “Acting now to address climate change by implementing a strong Climate Action Plan will ensure we take the most economical and effective steps for our city.”

The resolution moves on to the full City Council in August.

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION: Founded in 1980, Environmental Health Coalition

(EHC) builds grassroots campaigns to confront the unjust consequences of toxic pollution, discriminatory land use and unsustainable energy policies. Visit us online at <http://www.environmentalhealth.org>.

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