

The ECO Report



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19 ORGANIZATIONS CALL ON SAN DIEGO MAYOR FOR CLIMATE ACTION

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Mayor Faulconer urged to endorse plan to address climate change and commit funds in City's budget announced today

By Jo Communications

SAN DIEGO, May 20, 2014—Yesterday, a coalition of 19 community, environmental, business, social justice, labor and sustainability organizations called on Mayor Kevin Faulconer to take strong and immediate leadership to advance the City of San Diego's draft Climate Action Plan and incorporate funding for the plan into the revised city budget announced today.

The 19 organizations collectively represent more than 42,000 people in the region and recognize the high priority for the coastal metropolitan city to reduce air pollution that causes climate change. The organizations also want City leadership to prepare for the pending impacts of climate change, including sea-level rise and wildfires.

"I believe San Diego can and must be a leader when it comes to addressing global climate change, and I believe the plan that was drafted will have tremendous positive benefit for our region and for the lasting sustainability of our environment," said Council President Todd Gloria. "Its successful implementation requires an investment by the City, which I hope our mayor includes in his revised budget proposal."

The organizations' support letter reminds the new administration that the City needs an effective and accountable Climate Action Plan and calls on Mayor Faulconer to advance the February 2014 draft plan, with funding in the next fiscal year to complete and implement the plan, without weakening or delaying it. Points include:

- Act now to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 49 percent by 2035, consistent with state policy targets and the City's general plan
- Achieve 100 percent clean energy by 2035; reduce energy demand in existing buildings;
- Greatly increase use of public transit, walking and bicycling
- Maximize support of local, quality jobs that make our community healthier
- Take aggressive local action now; without delay or reliance on uncertain state and federal policies

The draft plan was composed with input from the public and the Economic and Environmental Sustainability Task Force, a City-appointed group representing a variety of interests including business, the environment, energy, the building industry, transportation, community, the Navy, and social equity.

"This plan has been developed through years of public input and is supported by a diverse set of stakeholders," said Task Force Chair Doug Kot. "All of us on this letter strongly recommend Mayor Faulconer advance the City's draft Climate Action Plan to the environmental review process and onto Council for approval as expeditiously as possible."

Kayla Race, policy advocate at Environmental Health Coalition and member of the Task Force, said, “Any delay in moving this plan forward or weakening of its content would deny San Diegans basic human essentials, including improved air quality and health, economic and infrastructure development and vastly improved quality of life for all San Diegans.” Race spoke yesterday at the San Diego City Council’s public hearing on Mayor Faulconer’s proposed fiscal year 2015 Budget, urging allocation of funds to complete and implement the Climate Action Plan.

Currently, the mayor and City departments are reviewing the draft Climate Action Plan with an expected completion by the end of May, though no formal timeline has been announced for next steps in the plan’s approval process. Council and the mayor will adopt a final City Budget for 2015 by the end of June.

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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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