



March 17, 2021

The Honorable Luz Rivas
 Chair, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
 State Capitol, Room 164
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 585 (L. Rivas) -- Support

Chair Rivas and members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee:

On behalf of our community, civic, faith-based, and environmental organizations, the leaders signed below express our strong support for AB 585, the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program. This landmark bill will coordinate and enhance the state's existing efforts to effectively address extreme heat and create a platform to support efforts by local governments and stakeholders, protecting communities from this escalating climate hazard.

In California, extreme heat events are now year-round, temperatures are rising more steeply and heatwaves are lasting longer. Extreme heat is climate change's most life-threatening impact and it disproportionately affects Black, Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islander communities that have been historically marginalized. It is a silent killer whose fatalities outnumber hurricanes, wildfires and flooding combined. In a ten-day California heat wave in 2006, over 650 people died due to heat-related conditions. Extreme heat also puts a strain on hospitals and the electrical grid. In August 2020, California experienced record breaking temperatures, resulting in rolling power outages which affected more than 490,000 Californians. In response, Governor Gavin Newsom issued two Extreme Heat Declarations of Emergency.

Thankfully, we have the ability to combat extreme heat. Should AB 585 become law, a statewide integrated program on heat would assist communities to develop solutions that fit their unique

conditions. AB 585 recognizes that state support for local actions require a variety of site specific and community-driven design elements.

AB 585 recognizes that communities, particularly historically marginalized communities, need support to implement life-saving actions that may include expanding an area's tree canopy, installing cool roofs and cool walls, building with cool pavement, stationing drinking fountains and shade structures in densely populated areas, and opening resilience hubs – these strategies may reduce the public health impacts of high heat. AB 585 will prioritize funding for community resilience planning and resilience hubs to focus resources where they're most needed.

Developing an integrated extreme heat community resilience program is the right next step to protect Californians from extreme weather. Like fighting the next pandemic, an ounce of prevention fighting extreme heat is worth a pound of cure. The longer we wait to act, the more difficult it becomes to respond effectively and protect human life.

We strongly support AB 585 and are eager to work with you to ensure that this public health measure receives the support that it and California needs. Passage of AB 585 will protect public health, foster reliability of the electrical grid, and create good jobs supporting the state's economic recovery.

We thank you, Assemblymember Rivas, for your leadership on this important issue and for your commitment to a livable future for all Californians.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Parfrey, Executive Director
Climate Resolve

Oraiu Amoni, Legislative Advocate
California Nurses Association
National Nurses United, AFL-CIO

Jeshow Yang, Policy Coordinator
Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement

Nayamin Martinez, MPH, Director
Central California Env Justice Network

Veronica Padilla-Campos, Executive Director
Pacoima Beautiful

Andy Lipkis, Project Executive
Accelerate Resilience L.A.

Eli Akira Kaufman, Executive Director
Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition

Eileen Anduenda, Executive Director
Council for Watershed Health

Miguel Angel Luna, President
Urban Semillas

Susan Stephenson, Executive Director
California Interfaith Power & Light

Veronica Hahni, Executive Director
Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative

Maryann Aguirre, Project Director
People for Mobility Justice

Dr. Shelley Luce, Executive Director
Heal the Bay

Eric Phillips, V.P. Policy and Legislation
APA California

Melissa Romero, Legislative Affairs Manager
California League of Conservation Voters

Rachel Norton, Executive Director
California State Parks Foundation

Evelin Weber, Executive Director
Malibu Foundation

Jay Ziegler, CA Dir. of Policy & External Affairs
The Nature Conservancy

Pamela Flick, CA Program Director
Defenders of Wildlife

Lauren Cullum, Policy Advocate
Sierra Club California

Maleeka Marsden, Co-Director of Policy
Climate Action Campaign