



Jesse Arreguín
Councilmember, District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 20, 2010

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmembers Jesse Arreguín and Kriss Worthington
Subject: Support Strong National Global Warming Legislation

RECOMMENDATION:

Send the attached letter urging U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein to continue to push for strong legislation that caps greenhouse gas emissions and invests in renewable energy.

BACKGROUND:

We know that global warming threatens our way of life. Experts predict that the decreased snow-pack in the Sierra's will mean massive shortages in clean drinking water in California; there will be a longer and more severe wildfire seasons, and coastal cities like San Francisco and Santa Monica will become submerged as sea levels rise. According to scientists, the window of opportunity to avoid the worst effects of global warming is quickly closing. The foremost challenge of the twenty-first century will be the fight against human induced climate change. California's 37 million citizens will experience adverse health, social, economic, and ecological effects resulting from global warming if the issue is not addressed immediately.

The City of Berkeley has already taken important steps to reduce its environmental impact. In November 2006, Berkeley voters issued a bold call to action on global warming with the Berkeley Climate Action Plan, which will reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 2000 levels by 2050.

The State of California has also been a leader in tackling the issue of climate change, by taking steps to reduce its environmental impact by passing the nation's first statewide cap on carbon emissions. The state also recently voted to construct the first high-speed rail in the United States. In addition, California has one of the highest renewable energy standards in the country, notably in terms of solar energy. 76% of citizens overwhelming support regulating emissions.

The next step is to carry the momentum of these actions into the declaration of a final, attainable goal: comprehensive national global warming legislation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:
NONE.

CONTACT PERSON:

Jesse Arreguín, Councilmember, District 4

981-7140

Attachments:

1. Letter

Dear Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein,

The City of Berkeley wishes to express its appreciation of your firm commitment and dedication to the issues of sustainability and climate change.

We take pride in our city and state and their bold examples of environmental leadership. The City of Berkeley has already taken significant steps to reduce its environmental impact. In November 2006, Berkeley voters issued a bold call to action on global warming with the Berkeley Climate Action Plan, which will reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 2000 levels by 2050. California has long been a leader in tackling the issue of climate change and made history with the nation's first statewide cap on global warming pollution and the construction of the first high-speed rail in the United States. In addition, it has one of the highest renewable energy standards in the country, notably in terms of solar energy.

However, those efforts alone are not sufficient enough to resolve the issue of climate change. We need to pursue and strengthen our fight against global warming; California's 37 million citizens will experience adverse health, social, economic, and ecological effects resulting from global warming if we fail to take action immediately.

Thus, in line with the significant steps that have been taken in California, we strongly believe that the next step is for you to push for strong comprehensive national global warming legislation that caps global warming and invests in renewable energy. This legislation should have strong targets for carbon emission cuts, high renewable energy standards, and promote green buildings and energy efficient homes. Your leadership on this issue will send a powerful message about the vital importance of committing our nation to fighting global warming.

Therefore, we urge you to be the global warming champion we need in the Senate.

Respectfully,

