



NORA VARGAS
CHAIRWOMAN
SUPERVISOR, FIRST DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM

DATE: **October 8, 2024**

14

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO DECLARE ITS SUPPORT FOR PROPOSITION 4 ON THE NOVEMBER 2024 BALLOT TO PASS THE SAFE DRINKING WATER, WILDFIRE PREVENTION, DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS, AND CLEAN AIR BOND ACT OF 2024 (DISTRICT: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Californians are feeling the impacts of a changing climate from devastating wildfires, loss of natural areas, extreme summer heat events, rising sea levels, and other major threats from a changing climate. In the County of San Diego (the “County”), the combination of inadequate, aging infrastructure and increasingly frequent climate-related emergencies has resulted in severe environmental, economic, and property damage.

The County has been working diligently with community stakeholders to develop concrete solutions to ensure the County has the necessary infrastructure to stay resilient in the face of these climate related challenges. While solutions have been identified, additional funding is needed to complete the infrastructure projects needed to address our changing environment. The County is committed to pursuing all available funding options at the local, state, and federal level. No single source will be sufficient, and a variety of tools are needed.

One such tool is Proposition 4, which is on the ballot this November and seeks to pass the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (the “Climate Bond”). The proposed Climate Bond, signed by Governor Newsom and passed with a bipartisan supermajority of California legislators, would authorize \$10 billion in state general obligation bonds for various projects to reduce climate risks and impacts, including:

- \$3.8 billion for safe drinking water and water resilience;
- \$1.95 billion for wildfire prevention and extreme heat mitigation;
- \$1.9 billion for protection of natural lands, parks, and wildlife;
- \$1.2 billion for protection of coastal lands, bays, and oceans;
- \$850 million for clean energy; and

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- \$300 million for agriculture.

The Climate Bond would also allocate specific funding to the San Diego region to help support some of the County’s most critical climate infrastructure needs. The Climate Bond’s San Diego region allocations, include:

- \$50 million for the Tijuana River Valley Watershed projects and New River Water Quality, Public Health, and River Parkway Development Program;
- \$48 million for the San Diego Rivers Conservancy for climate resilience projects; and
- \$25 million for the San Diego Rivers Conservancy for watershed improvement, wildfire resilience, chaparral and forest restoration, and workforce development.

Importantly, the Climate Bond would allocate at least forty percent (40%) of its funding to underserved and climate vulnerable communities, many of which have not received funding in past state bond efforts. To ensure the sustainability of these infrastructure projects, the Climate Bond would authorize a portion of the funds to be used for community access projects that benefit disadvantaged communities, severely disadvantaged communities, and vulnerable populations. These community access projects may include climate resilience efforts that involve issues related to transportation, physical activity programming, multilingual translation, workforce development and career pathways, and more. While there are costs associated with any bond funding, on net, the Climate Bond would likely result in long-term savings for the County by investing now in prevention efforts that will reduce the risk and amount of damage from future climate related disasters.

This board letter requests the San Diego County Board of Supervisors approve a resolution to declare its support for the Climate Bond. The Climate Bond provides a historic opportunity for San Diego and California to shift from disaster response to disaster prevention – investing in proactive measures to save California money, keep costs down for families, and protect our communities.

RECOMMENDATION
CHAIRWOMAN NORA VARGAS

1. Adopt a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO DECLARE ITS SUPPORT FOR PROPOSITION 4 ON THE NOVEMBER 2024 BALLOT TO PASS THE SAFE DRINKING WATER, WILDFIRE PREVENTION, DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS, AND CLEAN AIR BOND ACT OF 2024

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The funding authorized by Proposition 4 would prioritize disadvantaged communities and economically distressed areas. Many of these are communities of color living on the frontlines of environmental pollution due to a long history of environmental racism and unjust policies. This

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proposed resolution expresses the County’s commitment to pursuing funding solutions to meet the needs of its most underserved communities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

This proposed resolution supports funding that will help achieve a variety of the County’s sustainability goals, including preparing for the impacts of climate change, supporting green job creation and workforce development, remediation of environmental harms for communities that have been disproportionately impacted, and increased infrastructure to protect the County’s surface and groundwater.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

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The County has been working diligently with community stakeholders to develop concrete solutions to ensure the County has the necessary infrastructure to stay resilient in the face of these climate related challenges. While solutions have been identified, additional funding is needed to complete the infrastructure projects needed to address our changing environment. The County is committed to pursuing all available funding options at the local, state, and federal level. No single source will be sufficient, and a variety of tools are needed.

One such tool is Proposition 4, which is on the ballot this November and seeks to pass the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (the “Climate Bond”). The proposed Climate Bond, signed by Governor Newsom and passed with a bipartisan supermajority of California legislators, would authorize \$10 billion in state general obligation bonds for various projects to reduce climate risks and impacts, including:

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- \$1.2 billion for protection of coastal lands, bays, and oceans;
- \$850 million for clean energy; and
- \$300 million for agriculture.

Importantly, the Climate Bond would allocate at least forty percent (40%) of its funding to underserved and climate vulnerable communities, many of which have not received funding in past state bond efforts.

While the impacts of climate change affect all Californians, the provisions of the Climate Bond were informed by years of community engagement and input from stakeholders throughout the state who shared the unique climate resilience needs of their individual regions. The Climate Bond would also allocate funding to the San Diego region to help support some of the County's most critical climate infrastructure needs. The Climate Bond's specific San Diego region allocations, include:

- \$50 million for the Tijuana River Valley Watershed projects and New River Water Quality, Public Health, and River Parkway Development Program;
- \$48 million for the San Diego Rivers Conservancy for climate resilience projects; and
- \$25 million for the San Diego Rivers Conservancy for watershed improvement, wildfire resilience, chaparral and forest restoration, and workforce development.

In addition to these specific San Diego allocations, there are many other statewide allocations that will also benefit the County's communities. The Climate Bond not only provides critically needed funding, but also ensures the sustainability of these infrastructure projects by authorizing a portion of the funds to be used for community access projects that benefit disadvantaged communities, severely disadvantaged communities, and vulnerable populations. These community access projects may include climate resilience efforts that involve issues related to transportation, physical activity programming, multilingual translation, workforce development and career pathways, and more.

While there are costs associated with any bond funding, on net, the Climate Bond would likely result in long-term savings for the County by investing now in prevention efforts that will reduce the risk and amount of damage from future disasters. A UCLA study found that ten years of wildfire smoke have caused 50,000 premature deaths and \$400 billion in economic losses. Wildfire prevention, however, saves six times its cost in reduced damages, while also protecting our health.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's actions align with the County's 2024-2029 strategic plan and initiatives therein to actively combat climate change through innovative or proven policies, green jobs, sustainable facility construction or maintenance and hazard mitigation.

Respectfully submitted,



NORA VARGAS

Supervisor, First District

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO DECLARE ITS SUPPORT FOR PROPOSITION 4 ON THE NOVEMBER 2024 BALLOT TO PASS THE SAFE DRINKING WATER, WILDFIRE PREVENTION, DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS, AND CLEAN AIR BOND ACT OF 2024