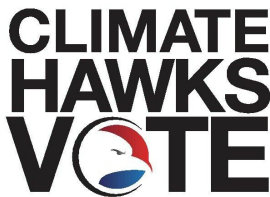


# CALIFORNIA GREEN NEW DEAL



EQUAL JUSTICE SOCIETY



May 22, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
Members of the Governor's Task Force on Business and Jobs Recovery  
State Capitol, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: A Just Recovery and New Future for California with a Green New Deal**

Dear Governor Newsom and members of the Governor's Task Force on Business and Jobs Recovery:

Today many of us are feeling the impacts of the collapsing global economy, health system, and social safety net as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. With 1 in 9 Californians filing for unemployment since March 12 and communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis hit hardest by the crisis, our state cannot risk returning to a volatile fossil-fuel economy that is on the verge of collapse. Our state leaders must act quickly to address the growing inequalities that have for decades been a daily reality for Californians living at the frontlines, who are now facing this pandemic in the face of racist attacks, chronic health conditions caused by pollution, and precarious employment.

As Californians, we show up for each other — no matter where we come from or what we look like. This pandemic is exposing the ways we all rely on each other for our health, safety, and wellbeing — as well as the ways our systems are falling short at protecting those most impacted by this crisis. That is why we are fighting for a Green New Deal for California that supports the communities hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic and invests in a future where we all can thrive.

After this pandemic subsides, yesterday's economy will be devastated, and its legacy is a foundation of inequality that has made the pandemic crisis worst for working families and people of color. The United Way estimated, prior to the pandemic, [nearly half of all Californians were struggling to survive](#). This is immoral and unacceptable in a state as abundant and wealthy as California; we must shape a new economy, not rebuild the old one.

California's response to this crisis must meet the urgent needs of all Californians and protect those who are hit hardest by the pandemic and recession: frontline workers, immigrants, the unhoused, and communities of color. It must be guided by an inclusive vision that deals with the root causes that got us into this crisis and centers climate, economic, and racial justice.

That means an immediate, massive, green stimulus and targeted economic support to our communities to deal with the economic collapse caused by the coronavirus and build a future where all people have what they need to live dignified, healthy lives. The Green New Deal offers a blueprint for a resilient economy — one that is built to protect all people, help those most in need, and sustain us through the new crises that lie ahead. Catalytic, large-scale investments in critical infrastructure, sustainable technologies, and green jobs will protect vulnerable Californians and prepare our state for the escalating crisis of climate change.

Our Coalition for a California Green New Deal offers the following set of principles and policy recommendations to ensure that California's economic recovery from the current crisis is truly inclusive and sets our state on the path towards a regenerative economy. Our recommendations are organized according to the platform developed by the Coalition for a California Green New Deal, available at <https://www.greennewdealca.org/>.

## Guiding Principles<sup>1</sup>

- The recovery in general, and the expenditure of recovery resources in particular, should be directed by a broadly inclusive and democratic process that ensures robust, accessible opportunities for all Californians to determine the future of our government and economy.
- Recovery resources should be primarily directed to workers and communities, not corporations and investors.
- The response of state and local government must be based on care and inclusion that lifts all people out of poverty.
- California's economic reconstruction should set as its top priority healthcare and housing for all people, with no exceptions.
- Recovery resources should include a set-aside for communities and populations hardest hit by the health impacts of the pandemic and by associated economic impacts, especially unemployment and wage losses, and the resources for those communities and populations should be expedited.
- The communities and populations most impacted by the pandemic and the economic crisis should self-determine their greatest needs, and recovery resources should be directed to address those self-determined needs.
- All recovery resources should be spent in a manner that avoids any harm to impacted communities and populations.
- Returning to the old economy is not an option; we must build a new one that is just, inclusive and sustainable.

## Coalition for a California Green New Deal's Priorities for a Just Recovery

1. **Good Jobs: Contribute our labor to the common good in a safe workplace, to protect existing union workers and the right to organize in a union, and be paid wages that allow us to prosper.**
  - a. What we don't want:
    - i. Means testing for unemployment or underemployment claims for any worker impacted by COVID-19.
  - b. What we want now:
    - i. Require that all economic relief efforts and investments designed to create jobs and protect business interests support a just transition to a clean energy, zero-emissions economy.
    - ii. Prioritize those negatively impacted by the extractive, fossil fuel economy, as well as those at risk of job loss due to automation, in local training programs that provide low-wage workers and residents facing employment barriers a pathway to green, safe jobs with living wages.
    - iii. Allocate funding to train health professionals who will serve underserved areas, address those regions' healthcare gaps, and are equipped with cultural and linguistic abilities and backgrounds to serve communities of color, immigrants, and low-income rural areas.
    - iv. Provide income supplements to meet all basic needs for anyone who needs them, including undocumented workers and mixed status families.
    - v. Provide adequate personal protective equipment for all essential frontline workers (including: access to masks, gloves, and other safety equipment, as well as sanitation supplies to disinfect hands, tools, clothing, and machinery).
    - vi. Ensure hazard pay and free childcare for all frontline workers providing essential services, including warehouse, farming, grocery, and delivery workers, emergency services providers, healthcare providers, and utility workers.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the People's Bailout Five Principles for Just COVID-19 Relief and Stimulus. <https://thepeoplesbailout.org/>

- vii. Provide health insurance and at least 14 days of paid sick and family medical leave for all essential frontline workers, and standards to report when workers feel ill and to stay home if they are sick.
- viii. Establish designated shopping hours for essential frontline workers.
- ix. The first right to recall for workers laid off during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- x. Implement a just transition that supports workers from all sectors who've lost wages or jobs due to COVID-19, with bridges to new employment including income, pension, and benefit support, retraining, and early retirement assistance.
- xi. Support SB 1257 (Durazo) to extend worker protections to domestic workers.
- xii. Support increased enforcement of the above workers' rights through Cal OSHA and local enforcement agencies.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Every Californian should be guaranteed a job with sufficient income to cover essential needs and services and the right to organize a union in the workplace to ensure that wages and conditions allow us to prosper.

**2. A Healthy & Regenerative Environment: Breathe clean air, drink clean water, eat healthy, nutritious food, live in a stable climate, and access nature and natural outdoor spaces.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Bailouts for fossil fuel and fossil fuel-dependent industries.
  - ii. Rollback or suspension of environmental regulations, including fuel efficiency standards.
  - iii. Diversion of GGRF to unrelated programs.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Base decisions on the best available science and data<sup>2</sup> and apply the precautionary principle.
  - ii. Conduct burdens analyses to ensure that implementation is equitable and avoids unintended consequences.
  - iii. Dramatic expansion of the network of air quality monitors in the state, prioritizing monitors in and around sensitive receptors in DACs.
  - iv. Establish a human right to clean, healthy air and require that state and local governments enact policies to uphold the human right.
  - v. Align state agency guidance, programs and planning to adequately address the impacts of freight on air quality, public health, and equity by strengthening coordination in the development and implementation of CARB and CTC's sustainable freight plans.
  - vi. Support AB 345 and regulatory efforts to ensure a safe buffer zone around fossil fuel production sites.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Strengthen environmental regulatory standards to protect public health, reduce exposure to harmful pollutants, and reduce overall pollution.
  - ii. Direct funding towards the development and implementation of community-identified priorities, including projects that promote improved air quality and climate resilience, provide increased access to green space, and promote social cohesion.
  - iii. Create good jobs in energy efficiency retrofitting, remediating contaminated sites and abandoned wells, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, wildfire vegetation management, mass transit, infrastructure construction, regional food systems including regenerative agriculture,

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<sup>2</sup> The state must ensure that data on COVID-19 cases and impacts includes the collection and reporting of race and ethnicity, age, income, gender identity, sexual orientation, and geography.

clean manufacturing, recycling, composting, and other zero-waste strategies, and other community-identified needs.

- iv. Clean, in-state procurement standards, including requirements for job quality, zero-emissions, and low-toxicity.
- v. Require that top polluters located in and around disadvantaged communities adopt plans to rapidly reduce emissions of all air pollutants. Prohibit public funding of and incentives given to these polluters without enforceable emission reduction plans.
- vi. A shift in the toxic economy towards a Just Transition that truly addresses health disparities and prioritizes the health of workers and frontline communities.
- vii. A transformative Just Transition to a restorative economy. Prioritize community-driven solutions that will be at the center of our new, green economy that improves community health and economic well-being.

**3. Resilience: Withstand systemic crises and disasters that disrupt our communities, and participate in a just recovery that transforms harmful systems and creates opportunities for all communities to thrive.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Response and recovery efforts that are limited to mitigation and reproducing pre-COVID-19 conditions that hinder communities' ability to adapt and thrive.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Local measures and relief that build upon the Executive Orders and respond to local impacts and needs.
  - ii. Funding for public health preparedness and response.
  - iii. Emergency funding for Community Resilience Centers to provide delivery of basic health and medical supplies, clean backup power, drinking water, air filters, cooling, food storage and distribution, and serve as sites for childcare or other social services, as well as economic and emergency assistance.
  - iv. Deploy distributed clean energy systems to reduce harm from power outages while improving air quality and offering economic savings to make it easier for Californians to stay safely sheltered in place. Clean, zero-emission, and community-led microgrids that integrate energy efficiency, renewable distributed generation, energy storage, and other technologies should be prioritized for installation in low-income housing and community facilities to protect communities from wildfires and Public Safety Power Shutoffs.
  - v. Green stimulus bond funding that supports community resilience projects and prioritizes communities and populations with the least capacity to recover and adapt from the COVID-19 crisis.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Continued investments in resilience, so communities and systems are able to prepare for disruptions, recover from shocks and stresses, and adapt and grow from disruptive experiences which are likely to increase as the climate crisis intensifies.

**4. Racial Justice: Focus state policies and resources on identifying and eliminating all racial disparities in life outcomes.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Strategies that exacerbate and replicate existing racial inequities.
- b. What we want now:

- i. Target investment in Black, Indigenous and other communities of color bearing the brunt of the health, economic, educational and housing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning with those facing homelessness, imprisonment, and systemic poverty.
- ii. Appoint to leadership positions Black, Indigenous and other People of Color who are closest to the issues and thus closest to the solutions.
- iii. Disrupt and eliminate xenophobic and racist narratives and policies in connection to COVID-19.
- iv. Support ACA 5 (Weber) to repeal Proposition 209, which has prevented equal opportunity programs in public contracting, public employment, and public education.
- v. Establish a statewide Office of Racial Equity to identify and address policies and practices in the state that contribute to, uphold, or exacerbate racial disparities.
- vi. Provide educational resources and support to students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities who are facing additional challenges to receiving quality education during the pandemic and its aftermath.
- vii. Release all medically fragile adults and adults over the age of 60 from California prisons to parole supervision, eliminate parole revocations for technical violations, and invest savings from decarceration into reentry services.
- viii. Commission disparity studies in all public institutions to serve as a foundation for race conscious targeted equity programming.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Establish an Office of Restorative Justice to provide coordinated, statewide support for restorative justice programs, both in schools as alternatives to exclusionary school discipline and in the criminal justice context as alternatives to incarceration and punishment.
  - ii. End policies and practices that have disproportionate negative impacts on communities of color, like discriminatory over-policing, prosecution, and incarceration, as well as unequal access to capital, clean air and water, education, jobs, and affordable housing.

**5. Immigrant Justice: Advance equity and full inclusion of immigrant and refugee communities in a just society, and to address conditions at the root of forced migration.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Citizenship or other immigration status requirements for any COVID-19 assistance.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Direct, ongoing cash assistance for undocumented workers and mixed status families. Expand on the Governor's Disaster Relief Assistance program by immediately establishing a temporary, partial income replacement program for workers excluded from state or federal benefits administered by EDD, and who are unemployed or underemployed as a result of COVID-19.
  - ii. Establish a permanent income replacement program for undocumented Californians that would operate similarly to unemployment insurance. Many undocumented workers collectively pay billions of dollars in taxes, but are excluded from unemployment insurance benefits due to requirements to show federal work authorization.
  - iii. Expand eligibility for earned income tax credits to include undocumented Californians, and allow it to go into effect retroactively.
  - iv. Expand eligibility for Medi-Cal to include undocumented seniors.
  - v. Respect for all refugee rights, including people displaced by climate disruption.
  - vi. Full inclusion of undocumented Californians in all recovery efforts.
  - vii. Order the immediate suspension of transfers from local/state custody to ICE.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:

- i. Explore ways for California to support federal refugee and asylum policy reform to include all asylum-seekers, including people displaced by climate disruption.
- ii. End immigration detention and enforcement in California.

**6. Indigenous Sovereignty: Recognize and adhere to Indigenous rights including self-determination, sovereignty, and stewardship and governance of ancestral lands.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Development of Indigenous lands without free, prior, informed consent.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Immediate investment in tribal nations and urban Indigenous communities, including streamlining access to medical supplies.
  - ii. Funding for Indigenous communities to implement traditional fire management and other ecological restoration practices.
  - iii. Universal enforcement and provision of services to improve the standard of living for Native peoples.
  - iv. Return of Native burial sites and ancestral remains to Indigenous stewardship, starting with the 12,000 human remains currently held at UC Berkeley.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Restoration of Indigenous land rights.
  - ii. Recognition of the right of Indigenous peoples to freely practice their religions, cultures and practices.

**7. A Strong Public Sector: Participate in an abundantly funded and accountable public sector that provides state and local services, as well as well-functioning infrastructure like parks, transit, libraries, and schools.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Hiring freezes in the public sector workforce.
  - ii. Privatization of critical infrastructure and services.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Direct financial assistance for cities and counties to continue needed services.
  - ii. Restore funding to local governments by supporting the passage of Schools and Communities First.
  - iii. Expand emergency lending to local governments and small businesses through the IBank by investing 1% of the average daily balance of the Pooled Money Investment Account into securities issued by the IBank. The IBank can then increase direct lending to cities and counties, and partner with local community banks, credit unions, and CDFIs for small business lending.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Convert the state's IBank to a depository institution with access to the Federal Reserve's discount window for cheaper public financing.
  - ii. Ensure that all Californians and corporations pay their fair share to fund our state and local governments.

**8. Housing: Stay in a home we can afford, in a safe, healthy and stable community.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. A single Californian to lose their housing due to an inability to pay.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Prohibit evictions for nonpayment for a defined period of time during and after the COVID-19 emergency, and immediately suspend all unlawful detainer actions.

- ii. Provide immediate rent relief or cash assistance to renters at risk of losing their homes because of sickness, inability to work, or other factors related to COVID-19, and eliminate debt for renters unable to pay rent during the pandemic.
- iii. Establish a program for short-term rental assistance, tenant education, and legal representation for precariously housed renters.
- iv. Create a fund to assist small housing providers so building owners can cover operating expenses.
- v. Provide forbearance for multifamily borrowers with state-financed mortgages.
- vi. Facilitate the distribution of recovery funds to support community ownership of naturally occurring affordable housing to stabilize communities and avoid further displacement.
- vii. Safe housing for unhoused populations, including temporary spaces (like hotels or dorms) to house those who have tested positive or exhibit fever/other COVID-19 symptoms and supportive services to transition unhoused people into permanent housing.
- viii. Build emergency sanitation sites near homeless encampments, including 24-hour restrooms and showers, laundry, free hygiene supplies, COVID-19 testing, caseworkers, and multilingual disease prevention information.
- ix. Provide shelters with additional funding for the purchase of PPE, sanitation supplies, and other needs.
- x. Moratorium on encampment sweeps and protections against property confiscation and the criminalization of unhoused people.
- xi. Support ACA 10 (Bonta), establishing a human right to housing under the California Constitution.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. State funding to support community land trusts and permanent real estate cooperatives.
  - ii. Establish statewide anti-displacement measures as a floor, with flexibility for stronger, tailored measures at the local level.

## **9. Healthcare: Receive universal single-payer healthcare.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Premature relaxing of shelter-in-place protections, which would overwhelm the medical system's capacity and put people's lives and health at risk.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Free testing, treatment, and prevention services for all, regardless of immigration status.
  - ii. Adequate PPE and sanitation supplies for all healthcare providers and caretakers.
  - iii. Presumed eligibility for nurses and other direct-care hospital workers for workers compensation for infectious and respiratory diseases like COVID-19.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Every Californian should be guaranteed universal medical care regardless of pre-existing conditions as well as, from cradle to grave, other caring services including childcare, in-home health services, care for those with disabilities, and care for the aging.

## **10. Education: Receive free and quality public education, from cradle to college, and to learn the skills we need for clean energy and zero-emission jobs.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Privatization of public education, as well as inequitable public education.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Forgiveness of student debt.
  - ii. Provide free public education resources for parents and students at all education levels.
  - iii. Restore funding to schools by supporting the passage of Schools and Communities First.



- iv. Eliminate racial disparities in student discipline and student achievement.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Every Californian should be guaranteed the ability to choose and participate in free, high-quality education, including college and vocational training.
  - ii. Job training and other strategies to create high road jobs in clean energy and other needed zero-emission sectors: solar, wind and storage installation, electrification, and energy efficiency, as well as training for nurses, domestic workers, childcare and eldercare providers, social workers, and teachers.
  - iii. Improved wages and benefits for teachers and other education workers.
  - iv. End exclusionary school discipline, such as expulsions, suspensions, and transfers to alternative schools, which disproportionately punish students of color and do not support their growth.
  - v. Implementation of restorative justice practices and trauma-informed support services in all schools.

**11. Public Goods: Rely upon clean, affordable, and reliable utilities, including renewable energy, water, and communications services that are accountable to the people.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Corporate profiteering from surveillance or data-mining.
  - ii. Exploitative payment plans for customers facing financial hardship.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Extend ongoing customer protections against utility shut offs, ensure that customers previously disconnected for nonpayment are quickly reconnected, and expand outreach to ensure that customers are aware of protections and assistance available to them.
  - ii. Forgive utility debt and ensure that nonpayment of utility bills does not negatively affect customers' credit scores.
  - iii. Ensure that costs incurred for COVID-19 customer protections are not shifted to ratepayers.
  - iv. Material assistance from electric and gas utilities to help medical baseline customers stay safely sheltered in place during power outages, *e.g.*, clean backup generation/storage to power needed medical devices.
  - v. Broadband access for all, prioritizing remote, rural, and underinvested areas.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Invest in Community Choice Energy and other municipal and publicly controlled utilities to provide 100% clean energy, with preference for local and on-site generation.

**12. Mobility: Move freely within and between communities, and access to safe, affordable, zero-emission and reliable transportation choices, including public transit.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Rollbacks of fuel efficiency and air pollution standards
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Funding to help public transit agencies survive the COVID-19 crisis, including PPE equipment for transit workers and riders, and thorough sanitation for buses and trains.
  - ii. Fare-free services for essential workers.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Improved public transportation infrastructure and operations in disadvantaged communities, including connectivity of unincorporated communities to business centers, medical services, public spaces and resources.

- ii. Subsidies and standards for electrification of buses, cars, trucks, and trains, ensuring equity in access to all modes of travel as well as elimination of air pollution and greenhouse gases.
- iii. Prioritization of safe, community-identified active transportation infrastructure projects to support walkable/bikeable neighborhoods.

**13. Democracy: Organize and to have an equal say in the decisions that affect our communities and workplaces.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Any measures that will reduce voter turnout or interfere with the fair conduct of elections.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Engage in clear communication about recovery policies and programs and conduct outreach in multiple languages to reach all Californians.
  - ii. Ensure that young people, working-class communities of color, voters with limited English proficiency, and the unhoused population have expanded options for voting, including safe, in-person, drop-off ballot voting, extended early voting, support for elderly and disabled voters, and in-language access to ballots and voting materials.
  - iii. Expand voting outreach and education to ensure that infrequent voters are aware of changes in voting options and available assistance.
  - iv. Robust, accessible remote public participation in critical meetings and decisionmaking during the current pandemic, including adequate interpretation.
  - v. Entrusting DACs, low-income communities, and communities of color with decision-making power and ensure that residents are meaningfully engaged and involved in all processes comprising a just economic recovery.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Provide online and interpretation tools to make public meetings truly accessible to all Californians.
  - ii. Require all public meetings to be held at times that are accessible for people working on different schedules including night shifts; e.g. one meeting during 9-5 hours and one meeting in the late evening.
  - iii. Ensure that regulators are not captured by the industries and entities they regulate.

**14. Polluters Pay: Recover just compensation and restoration from polluters and corporations for harms they cause and to require private actors to pay the full social costs of their actions.**

- a. What we don't want:
  - i. Workers and communities to be permanently left behind with the collapse of the state's oil industry in the event of a global recession.
  - ii. Bailouts for polluting and extractive companies.
- b. What we want now:
  - i. Just compensation for workers who are laid off or who would like to retire from the fossil fuel industry or industries reliant on fossil fuels, and the establishment of a fund to support early retirement of workers and fossil fuel infrastructure, as well as training and job placement for workers seeking to transition to the clean energy workforce.
  - ii. Require polluters to cap abandoned oil wells and remediate contaminated sites.
- c. What needs to be addressed long-term:
  - i. Establish a permanent environmental rehabilitation and infrastructure safety fund, sourced from property and production taxes on existing fossil fuel development, extraction, transportation, and refining.

- ii. Mandate a plan with a fixed timeline to permanently end all fossil fuel extraction, production, storage, and refining infrastructure in the state.

Sincerely,

**Coalition for a California Green New Deal**

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