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**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA****BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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September 3, 2021

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
 U.S. House of Representatives  
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the County of Santa Barbara, thank you for your support for S. Con. Res. 14, the *FY 2022 Budget Resolution*, and President Biden's Build Back Better plan. As Congress takes the next steps to draft the provisions for inclusion in the FY 2022 Budget Reconciliation package, the County requests your continued support for mitigation of climate change and supporting the role of local governments in the economic recovery.

On September 1, California Governor Newsom and nine other state Governors sent a letter to Congressional Leadership calling for bold climate investments in the Build Back Better legislation (attached). The County requests your support for this effort to prioritize climate change mitigation, including provisions for clean electricity generation and storage, transportation electrification, methane emissions reduction through plugging orphan wells, climate resilience to protect communities and transportation infrastructure, clean building incentives, and a clean energy and sustainability accelerator program. Santa Barbara County has faced unprecedented extreme weather in the past decade, including prolonged drought, extreme and intense wildfires, a year-round fire season, and a deadly debris flow preceded by a torrential storm burst. These direct impacts lend an urgency to the County's support for aggressive climate change mitigation on the federal level.

The County also requests support for direct funding to local governments for the improvement and maintenance of local roads. This would get federal transportation funding into the community as soon as possible to create and preserve American jobs, both in the private sector and the public sector. It would also maximize purchasing power by eliminating the burdensome additional administrative process and cost associated with multiple layers of government between funding and construction of shovel ready improvement and maintenance projects. The National Association of County Engineers, the National Association of Counties, and the California State Association of Counties, have all called for direct funding for roads owned and operated by local governments to address America's rapidly deteriorating transportation network and create jobs.

Every trip in this country begins and ends on a local road. Local roads are critical for moving people, providing services and delivering goods to market reliably and safely. Counties like Santa Barbara County play a critical role in the nation's transportation system: they own and operate 45 percent of all public roads. Coupled with the 33 percent of public roads owned and operated by cities and townships, local governments (counties and cities) own and operate 78 percent of this nation's road network.

The County also appreciates and supports the efforts to include new investment in local/public health, affordable housing, immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, workforce development, and community development. Thank you for your continued leadership on these critical issues. As the fiscal year 2022 budget reconciliation package is drafted, please continue to prioritize these measures to mitigate climate change and support the role of local governments in the economic recovery.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Gilchrest". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Don Gilchrest  
Washington Representative

DWG: awg

Attachment



September 1, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Room S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer:

As Governors from across the country, we strongly support your joint efforts to pass landmark legislation that will create millions of good jobs, rebuild our country's infrastructure, improve public health, advance environmental justice, and tackle the climate crisis.

Climate change is intensifying the wildfires that burn in the West, hurricanes that threaten the East, and extreme heat that endangers people and animals throughout the country. Now is the time for bold climate action. The most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report details what we already know – the window for preventing irreversible climate consequences is closing and we need to act quickly and comprehensively.

As we approach the 26<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP 26) in November, it is imperative that the United States demonstrates that America is ready to lead and solve the climate crisis. President Biden has committed America to cutting its greenhouse gas emissions to 50 percent to 52 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. America's ability to meet this goal rests on how we respond to climate change today.

President Biden proposed the Build Back Better Agenda to rebuild America in a just and equitable way and ensure America's economy flourishes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is vital for Congress to adopt both the bipartisan infrastructure deal and a bold and comprehensive reconciliation bill to achieve the goals of the

Build Back Better Agenda. Each of the elements of the Build Back Better Agenda are worthy of inclusion in an infrastructure package, but as Governors of states on the front line of the climate crisis, we place particular emphasis that the combined package includes the most impactful actions to protect our climate:

- **Carbon Free Grid:** A Clean Electricity Performance Program, expansion of tax credits for clean energy generation and storage, and funding for new and upgraded electricity transmission.
- **Transportation Electrification:** Tax credits for manufacturing of zero-emission vehicles; incentives for consumers, especially low-income consumers, to purchase zero-emission vehicles; funding for zero-emission infrastructure; and elimination of statutory obstacles to charging on federal rights of way.
- **Methane Emissions Reduction:** Funding to plug orphan wells and adoption of a methane polluter fee for the venting or burning of excess methane.
- **Climate-Smart Agriculture:** Investment in climate-smart agricultural and forest management programs for farmers and rural communities.
- **Climate Resilience:** Investment in protections for communities and transportation infrastructure from the impacts of climate change, as well as robust funding for a new Civilian Climate Corps.
- **Clean Building Incentives:** New consumer rebates for home electrification and weatherization.
- **Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator:** Establish an accelerator to mobilize private investment into distributed energy resources; retrofits of residential, commercial, and municipal buildings; and clean transportation.

We also respectfully request that any infrastructure package ensure 40 percent of the benefits of climate and clean infrastructure investments are directed to disadvantaged communities and invests in rural communities and communities impacted by the market-based transition to clean energy. We are excited to build back better with both of you and are committed to taking action to advance this crucial agenda.

Sincerely,



Governor Gavin Newsom  
State of California



Governor Ned Lamont  
State of Connecticut



Governor David Ige  
State of Hawaii



Governor Janet Mills  
State of Maine



Governor Steve Sisolak  
State of Nevada



Governor Kathy Hochul  
State of New York



Governor Kate Brown  
State of Oregon



Governor Tom Wolf  
State of Pennsylvania



Governor Dan McKee  
State of Rhode Island



Governor Jay Inslee  
State of Washington

cc: The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States  
The Honorable Gina McCarthy, National Climate Advisor  
The Honorable John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate  
The Honorable Michael Regan, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency  
The Honorable Jennifer Granholm, Secretary, Department of Energy  
The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary, Department of Transportation  
The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, Department of Agriculture  
The Honorable Marcia Fudge, Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development  
The Honorable Gina Raimondo, Secretary, Department of Commerce