

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

# An Open Letter to the Sierra Club

September 24, 2020

Dear Sierra Club,

Your advertisement “Open Letter to the People of California” (Sept 18, 2020, in the Los Angeles Times) felt offensive and manipulative. The goals are admirable – in fact, they are already embodied in California law and policy. But the path you want the Governor to take could hurt the real people and the communities we represent.

## Your world is not our world.

We are from rural and urban communities, with our livelihoods being in agriculture, small businesses, and personal services. We keep the “real” economic engine running and risk our health and lives during this pandemic. We are people who make tough daily choices about how to drive to work, feed our kids, share a video screen for school, and take our parents to the doctor. All these things are hard. Your world would make them only harder.

Let’s be particular on your five actions:

- 1** You want to phase out our “polluting” cars, the ones we drive to work and take our kids to the park in. It would require us to write hefty checks for those expensive EVs you like so much, and then pay higher energy bill so we can afford to drive them.
- 2** You want to phase out our “dirty” stoves, water heaters and furnaces. Here again, it would require us, or our landlords, to make investments we can’t afford so our residences can be rewired for these new HVACs and appliances. We are committed to making homes more affordable so Californians can own their homes, not take them farther out of reach. We don’t understand how this works.

- 3** Your ideas could allow our rich neighbors in the next town to charge their Teslas and run their air conditioners on hot days, but make it unaffordable to use ours. Your plan sounds like you want us to foot the energy bill for the “green” buildings where you rent office space, while our little businesses go broke with higher energy costs?
- 4** Let’s not wink and nod here: *You know perfectly well* that the tens of millions of drivers in California who drove HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS of miles in 2018 – mostly just to get to work – are not able to suddenly stop driving. So, we’re instead going to **IMPORT** all that fuel from Iran, Iraq, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Russia? And transfer our high-wage energy jobs overseas, while more Californians become unemployed? And that’s more humane and “equitable”?
- 5** When your funders from San Francisco and Hollywood call, your “strong climate leaders” pick up the phone. When we call, we are encouraged to “talk to our legislator.” We know the drill. It seems to us like those with lifestyles only a few can afford are more important than people who work hard, pay taxes, build small businesses, school their children, and make hard choices about whether their kids can afford to go to college.

Your world is not our world. Yours feels hypocritical and socially divisive and would disproportionately burden those who you claim to support the most – low-income and ethnic minority populations.

We are advocates for sensible, fact-based, and equitable energy policies. We come to the discussion in good faith with ideas to help ALL Californians. We hope you will join us with ideas that help ALL Californians as well.

## We are advocates for sensible, fact-based, equitable energy policies.

PAID FOR BY UNITED LATINOS VOTE

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