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Diverse Coalition Announces Launch of San Diego Green New Deal Alliance *Aims to Achieve Zero Carbon Future*

Today, a diverse, grassroots coalition of social justice, environmental, labor, faith-based and small business organizations announced the launch of a coalition championing a regional Green New Deal called the "San Diego Green New Deal Alliance."

The group announced their launch at a virtual event featuring elected officials and community leaders committed to creating a Zero Carbon region that creates clean air, good jobs and more just communities.

County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher voiced his support by connecting the links between overlapping challenges: "The climate crisis, ever-growing income disparity exacerbated by Covid, and deeply-rooted systemic racism are all tied. In order to meaningfully address these issues, we must champion a bold plan that recognizes how interconnected these problems are and how interconnected the solutions must be."

At the launch, San Diego City Councilmember Monica Montgomery expressed her optimism that the Alliance can help reverse the impacts of environmental racism. "This is a way that we can address the intersectionality of injustice," Councilmember Montgomery said. "The communities that I represent...are suffering some of the highest rates of unemployment, some of the highest rates of COVID-19 positive tests, some of the highest rates of pollution. It is time for us to...build power and put it back in the hands of the people, where it belongs."

In 2018, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a landmark report concluding that to avoid climate catastrophe, global emissions must reach net zero within the next couple of decades, with negative emissions thereafter.

The group will be focusing their initial efforts for a Zero Carbon future during two upcoming Climate Action Plan updates — the City of San Diego and the County of San Diego — as well as the SANDAG regional transportation plan.

The Chair of the San Diego Green New Deal Alliance, Maleeka Marsden of Climate Action Campaign, announced that the Alliance is 40 organizations strong. “We are dedicated to using our collective power to address these injustices, and model for other cities, the state, and the country how to achieve a climate safe and climate friendly future.”

Several other Alliance representatives spoke to the need to champion a San Diego Green New Deal to help disadvantaged communities recover from past and present harm.

“Our communities often have worse air quality, hotter temperatures, less access to public transit, and have to operate in a system that does not represent them,” said Reem Zubaidi from the UCSD Center for Community Health’s Refugee Health Unit. “I am fighting for the San Diego Green New Deal to elevate these issues and look for ways to address them.”

“The San Diego Green New Deal centers Black voices, Indigenous voices, people of color, understanding the value of having Black and brown faces in leadership in green spaces,” said Maria Muhammad of the San Diego Urban Sustainability Coalition.

As she explained, the Alliance is “demanding what every government is supposed to provide to its citizens — and that’s protection.”

Other community leaders spoke to both the potential to jumpstart the economy with good, green jobs, as well as the challenge of ensuring a just transition for workers displaced by a clean energy economy.

“Those who insist that there is a conflict between the fight against climate change and good economics are offering the public a false choice,” said Jim Miller, Vice President of AFT Local 1931. “Indeed, the fight to address catastrophic climate change is inevitably bound to our fight against our historic level of economic inequality.”

The Alliance also emphasized the need for community-led solutions, with Rosa Olascoaga from Mid-City CAN highlighting the importance of programs such as no-cost transit passes for youth, an important piece of the Alliance’s vision.

The group stated that this launch is just the beginning, and they will continue to host workshops and conduct research to implement a San Diego Green New Deal. More information on the San Diego Green New Deal Alliance, including ways for San Diego residents to get involved, can be found on their website: GreenNewDealSD.org

To watch the recorded launch event, [click here](#).

Additional Quotes:

Corinna Contreras, City Councilmember for Vista: “For a long time, Black and brown communities have been left out of the equation, except for right before election time when it's time for the politicians to come and court our communities. So the difference today is that we're not going to do that anymore. We're going to hold our elected officials accountable.”

Dr. Cindy J. Lin, Business For Good San Diego: “We are small business owners pooling our resources to commit to improving our community by going beyond our bottom line. This means continually investing in our employees, our environment, and the health of our community. For all of these reasons, that's why it's so critical to build a Green New Deal for San Diego.”

Maria Muhammad, San Diego Urban Sustainability Coalition: “Let's continue to work together, and work better. Because none of us are free until we are all free. So join us as we reclaim our communities and our birthright. Decent, clean communities, air quality, soil and water is our birthright.”

Brigitte Browning, President of UNITE HERE! Local 30: “I think we really need to reimagine what the hospitality industry looks like, because it has a very large carbon footprint. And if we don't come up with something together, the corporations will come up with things that sound really nice but really do little to help the environment and only save them money.”

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About the San Diego Green New Deal Alliance

The [San Diego Green New Deal Alliance](#) is a diverse, grassroots coalition of individuals and organizations united behind the need for climate action, jobs and justice. They are working together to ensure that the San Diego region achieves zero carbon by 2035 through a fair and just transition for workers and communities of concern, the creation of good family-sustaining jobs, and the development of affordable, equitable, and inclusive communities powered by 100% clean electricity.