



January 27, 2021

Mayor and Council
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101
Via Email

RE: Franchise Must Transition City of San Diego Off Fossil Fuels, Particularly Methane Gas

Honorable Mayor Gloria and City Councilmembers,

On behalf of the signed organizations, we urge you to secure two separate electric and gas Franchise Agreements that center a transition off fossil fuels, and towards community, equity, and workers.

As we all agree, our current gas and electric Franchise Agreements are a disservice to the City and ratepayers; and our current energy provider, SDG&E, has a track record of working against the City and community, rejecting even the Mayor and Council's own proposal for a modest one year extension.

For over a year we have advocated for and continue to support a robust and transparent public process, a detailed reevaluation of the financial value of the agreements, right to purchase options, a detailed public power business plan, the creation of a climate equity fund, standards, protections and union jobs for utility workers, preservation of biodiversity, natural habitat, and open space, and as the pandemic and recession continue unabated, rate relief for working families.

We urge you to evaluate each agreement separately.

Gas Franchise Agreement:

The most dangerous threat to public health and our ability to meet state climate goals is the continued use of methane gas in our homes and buildings. To tackle this threat, the City must require that:

1. Any gas franchise agreement or public power option commits to quickly and equitably transition the City away from dangerous methane gas;
2. Any gas franchise agreement term is no longer than 5 years, if at all; and
3. Gas utility workers are provided a just transition to the green economy and good paying union jobs.

Electric Franchise Agreement:

1. Any electric franchise agreement term is no longer than 5 years, if at all; and
2. Protect, preserve and equitably incentivize rooftop solar and battery storage, microgrid development, and emerging technologies that will make our electric system climate resilient.

Given this once in a lifetime opportunity to reshape our broken energy system and solve our longstanding challenges in winding down our gas infrastructure, we hope our new leadership at City Hall will center the conversation on behalf of ratepayers and the community.

We look forward to continuing to partner on this critical issue. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jim Miller,
Faculty Vice President
AFT Local 1931

Kyle Heiskala
Interim Executive Director
BikeSD

Mike Knab
Board Chair
Business for Good

Laura Ann Fernea
Executive Director
City Heights CDC

Suzanne Hume
Educational Director and Founder
ClearEarth4Kids

Matthew Vasilakis
Co-Director of Policy
Climate Action Campaign

Pam Heatherington
Board Member
Environmental Center of San Diego

Benjamin Eichert
Director
Greenpower

Paul Cleary
Executive Director
GRID Alternatives San Diego

Shelah Ott
Climate Justice Advocate
Hammond Climate Solutions

Maria Muhammad
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I Am Green

Tama Becker-Varano
Indivisible
Change Begins With Me

Ramla Sahid
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Tara Hammond
Manager
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Matt O'Malley
Executive Director & Managing Attorney
San Diego Coastkeeper

Colleen FitzSimons
Executive Director
San Diego Green Building Council

Eddie Price
Founder & CEO
San Diego Urban Sustainability Coalition

Dave Rosenfeld
Executive Director
Solar Rights Alliance

Richard Miller
Chapter Director
Sierra Club San Diego

JP Bruner
Climate Change Committee Lead
Surfrider Foundation San Diego