

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS

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Addressing Extreme Heat in Los Angeles County Through State and Federal Partnerships and Developing a County Extreme Heat Action Plan Framework

Exposure to high temperatures for long periods of time can cause heat-related illnesses that may require hospitalization and, in severe cases, even lead to death. While heat-related illness can impact anyone, older adults, young children, and those with preexisting health conditions are particularly vulnerable to the effects of heat. Low-income areas and communities of color burdened with pollution and highly paved environments that exacerbate heat bear the brunt of these impacts.

As human-caused climate change continues to alter our environment, Los Angeles County is experiencing rising temperatures and hotter, longer heat waves. In fact, the [LA County Climate Vulnerability Assessment](#) identified extreme heat as one of the most pressing climate issues. A study of Southern California from 1950-2020 showed heat waves increasing in frequency, duration, and intensity. As climate change advances, heat waves are beginning to start earlier and end later. These conditions are most acute

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in inland, urban areas.¹ Despite existing mitigation efforts, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) anticipates, even in the best-case scenario, that surface temperatures will continue to increase until at least mid-century.²

President Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. has taken decisive action to combat climate change, including addressing extreme heat. The Biden Administration has allocated funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law towards programs that aim to construct resilient infrastructure, enabling communities to better withstand heat-related hazards such as droughts and wildfires. Nevertheless, the President's focus on extreme heat extends beyond his landmark legislation. Last summer, the Administration bolstered the National Integrated Heat Health Information System (NIHHIS), an interagency integrated information system addressing extreme heat, by launching a new website – www.heat.gov – to provide Americans with science-based methods to reduce the health risks associated with extreme heat. This summer, on July 11, 2023, the President announced additional measures to safeguard communities from extreme heat. These measures include the establishment of virtual research centers to assist communities in enhancing their extreme heat resiliency, the development of a National Heat Strategy, and a conference to support local elected leaders and tribal officials prepare their communities for prolonged periods of extreme heat.

¹ Hulley, Dousset, & Kahn. Rising Trends in Heatwave Metrics Across Southern California. *Earth's Future*, <https://doi.org/10.1029/2020EF001480>; May 2020.

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2021). *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Masson-Delmotte, V., et al. (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press.

https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf

In parallel with the White House, the State of California and the County of Los Angeles are centering heat mitigation efforts within climate change resiliency efforts. On Tuesday, July 12, 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom's Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications announced "Heat Ready CA," a two-year \$20 million advertisement and communication campaign to address heat.

A part of the larger \$404 million [California's Extreme Heat Action Plan](#), Heat Ready CA is a culturally responsive awareness and education campaign designed to keep Californians safe during extreme heat. It will utilize various outreach methods, including social media and influencer engagement. The campaign will collaborate with community-based organizations, ethnic media, meteorologists, and other partners to engage a diverse audience in more than 30 languages. The campaign will also employ door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, community activations, and other outreach methods.

The County has also taken critical steps forward to address extreme heat. On November 1, 2022, the Board of Supervisors passed a [motion](#) authored by Supervisor Hilda L. Solis entitled "Investigating Safe Maximum Indoor Temperature Thresholds to Assist Heat Vulnerable Tenants and Workers in High-Risk Workplaces." Passed unanimously by the Board, that motion directing the Department of Public Health (Public Health) to investigate safe maximum temperature thresholds for dwelling units and high-risk workplaces in coordination with the Chief Sustainability Office (CSO). The County also offers [conveniently mapped](#) cooling centers across the County and has taken important measures to address the root causes of extreme heat through initiatives like

the [Climate Action Plan](#). However, further action is necessary to address extreme heat adequately and equitably.

Among the measures recommended in the [LA County Climate Vulnerability Assessment](#) are implementing adaptation and mitigation measures and leading public awareness. To best implement these recommendations, the County should collaborate with the state on its Heat Ready CA campaign and the White House's NIHHS, to maximize infrastructure for heat resiliency, and develop a comprehensive plan to address extreme heat.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Department of Public Health (DPH), in collaboration with the Chief Sustainability Office (CSO), the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the Department of Health Services (DHS), the Internal Services Department (ISD), and Countywide Communication, to engage the State's Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications and the White House's National Integrated Heat Health Information System on their respective heat awareness campaigns to maximize outreach in Los Angeles County, with an emphasis on the most vulnerable populations and communities, and report back in 120 days with a partnership status update;
2. Direct the CSO, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Office – Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, DPH, OEM, DHS, and ISD advocate for state and federal funding, including from the State Extreme Heat Action Plan and

federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, for County projects and programs and keep the Board apprised of related grant funding opportunities;

3. Direct the CSO, in collaboration with DPH, OEM, DHS, ISD, Chief Executive Office (CEO), the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Public Works, LA County Development Authority, and the Fire Department, to report back in 120 days with a framework for a County-specific Heat Action Plan that includes a summary of existing initiatives, gaps, and opportunities to address those gaps, and includes measures such as public warning systems, improvements to the network of cooling centers, and heat-resilient infrastructure planning; and
4. Direct the CSO to pursue state, federal, and philanthropic funding to support the development of a Heat Action Plan, and delegate authority to the Executive Office to enter into or amend any contracts or agreements as necessary to support the Chief Sustainability Office in its development of the Heat Action Plan framework.

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