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GREENLINING.ORG

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
1021 O St. Ste 8630
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Committee on Budget
1021 O St. Ste. 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski
Chair, Senate Subcommittee 2
1021 O St. Ste 6530
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Bloom
Chair, Assembly Subcommittee 3
1021 O St. Ste. 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairs Skinner, Ting, Wieckowski, and Bloom:

The Greenlining Institute is working towards a future where communities of color can build wealth, live in healthy places filled with economic opportunity, and are ready to meet the challenges posed by climate change.

Governor Newsom announced his 2022-23 California budget proposal which includes a massive \$45.7 billion revenue surplus to be spent on crucial state programs that will benefit historically underserved communities including low-income people and communities of color. The governor's proposal outlines a COVID-19 response and relief package including small business support, a solid affordable housing strategy, workforce training and job opportunities, universal health care access and expanded reproductive health care, and a transformative climate action package.

The Greenlining Institute applauds this forward-thinking budget proposal and looks forward to working with Governor Newsom and the Legislature to make necessary additional investments to protect the health and well-being of all communities as they cope with the impacts of a changing climate. We respectfully ask that your subcommittees support the Governor's proposal in the areas indicated below and that the Legislature address the areas where the Governor's proposal can improve.

Support the Governor's proposal:

- Regional Climate Collaboratives - \$10 million
- Transformative Climate Communities - \$165 million
- Housing as a Climate Strategy Package - \$1 billion

Opportunities to improve on the Governor's proposal:

- Increase Funding for Zero-Emission Vehicles Package - \$8 billion total
- Allocate Funding to Eliminate Utility Debt - \$2 billion
- Increase Funding for Community Resilience Centers - \$500 million total
- Increase Funding for Low-income Weatherization Program - \$75 million total
- Increase Funding for Urban Community Forestry and Urban Greening - \$175 million total divided evenly between both programs

ZEV Package (\$8 B: \$1B for Equity Programs, \$4.8B for MDHD, \$2B for charging infrastructure)

The Governor's \$6.1 billion zero-emission vehicle proposal is a great start that the Legislature can build on to deploy critically needed clean energy technologies to the communities that need it most. We appreciate the governor's commitment to equity by targeting funding to equity focused programs like Clean Cars 4 All, Clean Vehicle Assistance Program, Clean Mobility Options and Sustainable Transportation Equity Project that provide the most benefits to low-income communities of color. We applaud his commitment to providing no new funding and start the phase out of the Clean Vehicle Rebate Program that doesn't prioritize investing in the communities that stand to benefit the most from these critical taxpayer dollars.

However, more is needed. California continues to experience some of the worst air quality in the nation. We urge the Governor and Legislature to increase funding to \$8 billion in order to fully fund clean transportation equity programs and ensure those investments are made in historically disadvantaged and low-income communities. By increasing the funding amount, state leadership is demonstrating its commitment to an equitable mobility future that is not just centered on vehicle incentives, but one that prioritizes bottom-up solutions to transportation needs

Utility Debt (\$2 billion)

The Greenlining Institute strongly urges the Legislature and Governor Newsom to include at least \$2 billion for debt owed to publicly owned and investor-owned energy utilities whose ratepayers lack protection from disconnection. This request acknowledges that energy debt continues to accrue in low-income communities and that while California approved \$1 billion energy debt in FY' 21-22, at least \$2 billion in additional funding is needed to alleviate this economic burden.

Community Resilience Centers (\$500 M total)

While we appreciate the Governor recommitting to funding the Community Resilience Centers program administered by the Strategic Growth Council, additional funding is needed to invest in the construction and rehabilitation of neighborhood-based community facilities across California that address the growing needs of working class communities of color in the face of the converging climate, economic, public health crises (e.g., wildfires, power outages, smoke waves, extreme heat, and evacuations). This program would enable community-driven and whole building upgrades in order to provide integrated delivery of emergency response services including clean backup power, clean air respite, cooling, food storage and distribution, shelter, telecommunications and broadband services, economic assistance, and other public health measures. The new program will offer immediate-term respite and relief at trusted buildings and shared facilities (including senior and youth centers, park and recreation sites, libraries, health clinics, schools, food banks, community centers, emergency shelters, healthcare centers, nonprofits and places of worship) during climate disasters alongside crisis preparedness and recovery in disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

Low-income Weatherization Program (\$75 M total)

We call for a total investment of at least \$75 million for the Low-Income Weatherization Program (LIWP). This program enables a wide range of clean energy services, including energy efficiency and solar, for low-income households and building owners leading to affordable housing preservation, utility bill reduction, job creation, and improvement of resident health, safety, resilience, and comfort. Streamlining delivery of energy upgrades through LIWP and home health remediation efforts is also being undertaken with the implementation of AB 1232 (Gloria, 2019), which will ensure that priority populations can access and maximize these integrated benefits quickly.

Urban Community Forestry and Urban Greening (\$175 M total, divided evenly between both programs)

We respectfully request a total of \$175 M for CalFIRE's Urban Community Forestry and CNRA's Urban Greening programs. Local shade trees and local access to parks and green spaces are critical to the mental and physical health of disproportionately underserved communities. In urban areas, where 90% of Californians live, the primary mechanism to sequester carbon, clean our air, and reduce stormwater runoff is our urban forests. CAL FIRE's Urban & Community Forestry Program advances all of these objectives while also supporting jobs and workforce development in California's most underserved communities. CNRA's Urban Greening Program helps to build resilience in communities by increasing access to cool, quiet places to breathe fresh air, exercise, and experience shade and outdoor solitude in disadvantaged and underserved communities. This popular and multi-faceted program can support converting existing built environments into parks; and reduce commute vehicle miles traveled by constructing bicycle paths, bicycle lanes or pedestrian facilities that provide safe routes for travel between residences, workplaces, commercial centers, and schools.

Regional Climate Collaboratives (\$10 M)

We thank the governor for recommitting to funding the implementation of SB 1072 (Leyva, 2018) to create the Regional Climate Collaboratives program will build the capacity of local communities to make the investments necessary to transition all of California to a climate resilient future. The collaboratives will assist in building community-driven leadership, knowledge, skills, technical assistance and resources to identify and access public funding for climate mitigation and adaptation projects.

Transformative Climate Communities (\$165 M)

We also appreciate the commitment to make good on last year's budget commitment to fund the Transformative Climate Communities program. The TCC program advances community-led decision-making to address the needs of residents and achieve local transformation. Multiple emission-reducing services delivered in a coordinated way—like affordable solar-powered housing with access to public transit and active transportation—can transform long-neglected neighborhoods into models of economic and environmental sustainability.

Housing as a Climate Strategy Package (\$1 billion)

The Greenlining Institute advocates for climate investments in housing that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and builds community resilience to climate change, while also ensuring these communities aren't left behind in this new economy. We believe everyone deserves safe, healthy homes and neighborhoods where people can raise healthy families. As such we support the Governor's approach encouraging developing housing in communities that are best positioned to connect people to jobs, education.

Sincerely,



Alvaro Sanchez
VP of Policy, The Greenlining Institute

CC: Shy Forbes, Resources and Environmental Protection Consultant, Assembly Subcommittee #3 on
Climate Crisis, Resources, Energy, and Transportation
Joanne Roy, Environmental Protection Consultant, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review