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Katherine Douglas *Public Comment - CEC*

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**From:** Michael Chiacos <mchiacos@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 26, 2026 11:35 AM  
**To:** Joan Hartmann; Laura Capps; Steve Lavagnino; Roy Lee; Supervisor Nelson; sbcob  
**Cc:** Sigrid Wright; Garrett Wong  
**Subject:** Climate Action Plan Support Letter from Community Environmental Council  
**Attachments:** CEC Comments on Climate Action Plan 1-26-26.pdf

**Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.**

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

Please see the attached letter from the Community Environmental Council, in support of the County's Climate Action Plan. Clerk of the Board, please confirm receipt of this email. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael Chiacos  
Senior Policy Consultant  
Community Environmental Council



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January 26th, 2026

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

*RE: Agenda Item 3, Progress Update on the One Climate Initiative, 2030 Climate Action Plan and Energy Assurance Plan*

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

The Community Environmental Council strongly supports the County's climate and sustainability goals and actions, including the 2030 Climate Action Plan and Energy Assurance Plan. While the headline number of a 1% increase in emissions between 2018 and 2023 seems disappointing, there are some nuances and delays in the data that would show more progress and a modest but significant decrease in GHG emissions if more updated data were available. CEC urges the County to continue implementing the Climate Action and Energy Assurance Plans, and to advocate for Central Coast Community Energy to strive harder to meet their goal of delivering 100% renewable electricity by 2030.

To start, we applaud the progress made in the transportation and natural gas sectors. Per the GHG Inventory Memo (Attachment C), GHGs from 2018 to 2023 have fallen 7% in on-road transportation, which is the largest sector with almost half of total emissions. They have also decreased 14% in natural gas, the second largest sector, while increasing an alarming 99% in electricity, which is the third largest sector. These three sectors total 87% of the overall communitywide emissions.

At the same time, we understand why electricity GHGs have doubled and thrown off the whole inventory. When the County voted to move forward with joining Central Coast Community Energy (3CE), 3CE was providing 100% carbon-free electricity, by purchasing renewables, large hydro, and renewable energy credits. While this looked good in GHG inventories, their board believed that purchasing existing hydro and already built renewables wasn't the strongest strategy for reducing GHGs. Instead, they developed a policy (which the Community Environmental Council supported) to secure long term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) for new renewables, targeting 60% by 2025 and 100% by 2030. This would ensure new wind, solar, geothermal, and storage projects were built to serve 3CE customers. There was an acknowledgement that emissions would increase in the near term, but the approach would lead to real, long-lasting emission reductions in the long term.

[3CE's 2023 Power Content Label](#) shows they only achieved 30% renewable energy that year, and had stopped buying hydro and nuclear carbon-free power, with 69% unspecified power. 3CE explained that it had many long term PPAs for new renewable projects that had been delayed or canceled due to pandemic issues. This led to purchasing more unspecified power and a very high GHG emissions intensity of 725 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>e/MWh, which was almost double the CA grid average of 373 lbs CO<sub>2</sub>e/MWh.

[By 2024, 3CE's Power Content Label](#) shows they were getting back on track, with 56% renewables and 417 lbs CO2e/MWh, or almost half the electricity emissions of 2023. While the 2025 Power Content Label hasn't yet been released, [3CE has stated](#) they are on track to achieve 60% renewables by 2025 on the path to their goal of 100% renewables by 2030.

If 3CE is able to achieve 100% renewables by 2030, and all other emissions remain steady, total countywide community emissions in 2030 would be 17% lower. While this is only a fraction of the County's 50% by 2030 goal, we will see significant compounding reductions in the transportation and natural gas sectors as vehicle and home electrification really takes off and we ditch fossil fuels for 100% renewable electricity. From 2023-2025, [20-22% of new vehicle sales in Santa Barbara County were EVs](#), along with growing numbers of hybrids and more efficient conventional vehicles, so significant fleet turnover will start to show up in more recent data. Additionally, most new homes and apartments are being built all-electric, along with significant retrofitting of existing homes from natural gas appliances to heat pumps and other high efficiency electric appliances. This is in part due to the County, 3CE, 3CREN, CEC, and other organization's efforts to move our region away from fossil fuels and toward 100% clean and renewable energy.

It is important to note also that the County's most recent Climate Action Plan was adopted in 2024, which was after the 2023 data that is presented in this report. In recent years, the County and other organizations have been staffing up and developing new programs to make more significant climate and sustainability progress.

CEC urges the County to continue implementing their Climate Action Plan. We also encourage Supervisor Hartmann to advocate with 3CE staff and other Policy Board members to make sure 3CE stays on track to reach their 100% renewable electricity goal by 2030, while continuing to grow programs to help our region move away from fossil fuels. CEC also strongly supports the County's significant and successful efforts to bring in new sustainability related grant funding, as well as for the County to advocate at 3CE, 3CREN, and other organizations to continue developing innovative programs to transition our region away from fossil fuels and toward sustainable energy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Chiacos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael Chiacos  
Senior Policy Consultant  
Community Environmental Council