



**For Immediate Release:** June 26, 2024

**Contact:** Dave Weiskopf, [david.weiskopf@nextgenpolicy.org](mailto:david.weiskopf@nextgenpolicy.org)

## **NextGen California Responds to Legislative Budget Proposal: “We need to think bigger for a California Climate Commitment 2.0”**

*Amidst major budget cuts and funding reductions, NextGen California is calling on lawmakers to redouble efforts to address the climate crisis*

SACRAMENTO – Today, Governor Newsom and the California Senate and Assembly jointly agreed to a Budget proposal, adopting many, but not all of the proposed rollbacks to the California Climate Commitment proposed by Governor Newsom in the May Revise.

“This budget heralds the end of the California Climate Commitment 1.0. California’s brief effort to expand climate investments beyond the limited cap and trade funding brought a welcome infusion of additional investments. We need to think bigger for a California Climate Commitment 2.0” said NextGen California Senior California Advisor, David Weiskopf.

This budget effectively draws to a close the state’s efforts to supercharge California’s efforts on climate that began as a \$54 billion commitment in the budget adopted in 2022. Since that time, a slowdown in state revenues and an infusion of federal dollars under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act have resulted in delays, borrowing, and cuts to that \$54 billion commitment.

This budget rounds out funding for \$36.5 billion of the original \$54 billion through the end of the budget year. It also outlines a path to increase that spending to \$45 billion in total over the next five years by leaning heavily on tapping Cap and Trade revenues to backfill cuts to the General Fund.

These moves would, if implemented, maintain a substantial share of the funding for programs in the original Climate Commitment, but at the expense of other climate-focused programs the GGRF would otherwise support. This means these “shifts” are better characterized as cuts to the state’s total level of climate investment – some previously agreed-to program priorities are protected, but total funding is not.

NextGen’s Climate 100 project, which seeks to better align all parts of California’s budget with the state’s greenhouse gas reduction targets, issued the following statement:

### **Statement from NextGen California Senior California Advisor, David Weiskopf:**

“We thank and congratulate the Governor and the Legislature for their efforts to secure truly historic and world-leading levels of climate investments in our state. The \$36.5 billion secured for climate over the last three years is a lot of money. But despite the scale of this investment,

we all know that the climate crisis will exact costs on us far in excess of what we can allay with periodic and temporary one-time funding when we happen to have a budget surplus. California can and must do more to meet this moment.

“This budget heralds the end of the California Climate Commitment 1.0. California’s brief effort to expand climate investments beyond the limited funding available in the GGRF brought a welcome infusion of additional investments. But we are now poised to return to last decade’s business as usual on climate investments, which will cost our state dearly in the coming years unless we change course. This zero-sum approach, which pits necessary investments against each other within a small pot of available funding, is not sustainable in the face of an accelerating climate crisis.

We need to think bigger for a Climate Commitment 2.0. That means finding new, dedicated sources of funding through a climate bond and a climate-aligned school bond, closing tax loopholes that subsidize the oil industry, and creating new, stronger polluters-pay mechanisms for the harm fossil fuel companies have caused to our state. It also means adopting a Climate 100 approach: Every department has a role to play both in protecting Californians from the climate crisis and offering solutions to help us meet our climate pollution reduction targets.

It’s time to seriously rethink our state’s approach to budgeting to take full account of the role climate change plays in our lives: later is too late. Climate touches every part of our lives. How we budget should reflect this reality.”

###

The mission of NextGen Policy and NextGen California is to fight for progressive policy change to address environmental, social, racial, gender, and economic inequities in California through justice-centered legislative advocacy, grassroots partnerships, and democratic civic engagement.