

Putting California's Wealth to Work, Advancing California Values, and Meeting California's Challenges

California has faced extraordinary challenges this year - from attacks on women's reproductive rights at the federal level, to the rising cost of living, and continued housing challenges. In addition, California is in the midst of an urgent climate crisis that includes an historic drought, extreme heat, and the never-ending threat of catastrophic wildfires.

Senate Democrats were prepared this year to tackle these challenges head on, always keeping California values at the forefront of our policy development. In enacting California's 2022 Budget, Senate Democrats responded with thoughtful and smart investments to keep our state moving forward, while simultaneously being fiscally responsible by building healthy reserves.

Democrats fought back against the multitude of attacks to women's reproductive rights and made strategic investments to ensure California remains a safe haven not only for Californians, but also for those living in states that lack basic access to reproductive services. Senate Democrats battled rising costs by providing direct financial relief to middle class families and small businesses. We made multibillion-dollar infrastructure investments that will provide new housing and create jobs in our state. We worked tirelessly on a comprehensive climate package that will address our most pressing climate crises. And finally, but equally important we prioritized K-12 and higher education, and went further to invest in childcare, student nutrition and helped to ensure no child lives in deep poverty.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Combating Climate Challenges

California is facing several simultaneous climate crises - drought, wildfire, rising sea levels, and strains on the energy grid. The threat of climate change is not a theoretical issue and Senate Democrats put together a multi-billion dollar climate-energy package to help with our drought and wildfire response, address sea level rise, and invest in reducing harmful emissions and expanding our renewable infrastructure. Senate Democrats are leading the way on reducing plastic waste by creating a law to require 25 percent reduction in plastic packaging by 2032.

Senate Democrats are establishing ambitious and necessary goals to reduce carbon emission and increase renewable energy. Some of the highlights of the climate package include legislation that helps us achieve 100% clean and renewable energy by 2045, establishing a workable plan to meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets. Establishment of health protective zones that limits new or improvements for oil and gas wells will improve air quality for some of California's most vulnerable residents. Codifying our carbon neutrality goals ensures that laws and regulations work in step to achieve necessary changes.

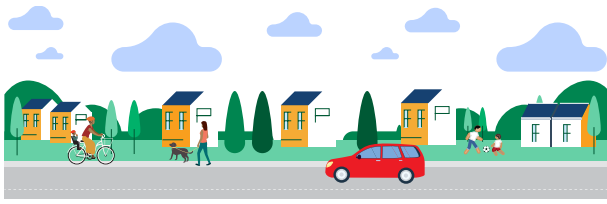
The goals set by Senate Democrats are achievable, as other significant legislation takes steps to address multiple facets of our climate challenge. These include carbon sequestration for working lands, establishing a regulatory process for the evolving technology of carbon capture, changes to ensure our electricity grid can meet California's future electrification goals, and establishing and promoting multiple efforts to ensure ALL Californians will have access to zero emissions vehicles.

Senate Democrats are not only setting ambitious goals, we are giving regulators and industries the tools they need to meet them.



Enshrining Reproductive Rights

California has never skirted from fighting to protect our most basic rights and this year we faced an unprecedented challenge when the United States Supreme Court overturned the 50 year precedence in ROE v WADE, setting women's reproductive rights back decades. Senate Democrats responded aggressively and swiftly to secure \$200 million in the state budget to support women's reproductive services, created new protections for providers and established protections and financial assistance for out-of-state individuals who come to California to receive care. Democrats are taking the legislative steps to enshrine the right to abortion in our state constitution; setting an example other states can follow.



Expanding Affordable Housing

Senate Democrats aim to make the dream of home ownership a reality for thousands more first time homebuyers. The California Dream for All act will allocate hundreds of millions of dollars to help first time homebuyers lower their down payment, thereby reducing their monthly mortgage payments. The California Dream for All Act will help middle class homebuyers grow generational wealth and participate in the housing economy.

Senate Democrats constructed a housing package that aims to streamline housing production in commercial zones and make homeownership more attainable for working families. The Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act will accelerate housing production, especially in transit friendly corridors, closer to where people work and commute. This housing initiative will not only increase housing supply but will strengthen our middle-class workforce.

Confronting our Homelessness Crisis

California is facing a devastating homelessness crisis, which worsened significantly with the COVID-19 pandemic. Senate Democrats invested billions into a multiyear affordable housing package that includes investments in the Multifamily Housing Program, the Housing Accelerator Program, farmworker housing, ADU financing, veteran housing and homelessness prevention. We are looking at the housing shortage from all angles and developing innovative solutions both within our existing infrastructure, and with new infrastructure investments.

Our approach to homelessness intervention also includes a focus on mental health. The 2022 State Budget established the Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment Court, a new policy framework to assist people living with untreated mental health and substance abuse challenges, providing the care and services they need to get healthy and get housing. This compassionate approach meets individuals where they are at, providing community based mental health and substance abuse services, with the goal of ending destructive cycles and getting people off the streets permanently.



Prioritizing Public Education

Senate Democrats made K-12 and higher education a top priority by getting students back on track to be successful both inside and outside the classroom. Senate Democrats have focused our education policies on a well-rounded approach to education, not only putting more money directly in the classroom, but also by making investments in school facilities, school transportation, student housing, universal school meals and increasing funding for arts, music and multi-lingual instruction.

Childcare Expansion and No Child in Deep Poverty

Senate Democrats prioritized providing funding for early childhood education and access to childcare. We are expanding eligibility for transitional kindergarten and childcare programs, including state preschool. We are also investing in renovations and repairs of childcare facilities as well as preschool, transitional kindergarten and full day kindergarten facilities.

Senate Democrats increased CalWORKs grant levels by 21 percent with continued increases over the next two years to ensure children in the CalWORKs program do not live in deep poverty.



Lifting up Middle Class Families

All Californians are still recovering from the financial setbacks they experienced during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of that, the cost of living has increased significantly in both housing costs and the cost of everyday necessities. Senate Democrats have provided direct relief to California families, small businesses and non-profits with the Middle Class Tax Rebate plan. Families will be eligible for direct refunds, which is money directly into the pockets of Californians. California small businesses and non-profits will be eligible for direct relief as well, to help offset some of the increased costs they are incurring.



Historic Infrastructure Investments

The 2022 State Budget provides a record investment in infrastructure, including billions for school facilities, housing production, dam safety, broadband infrastructure, improving our transit, and infrastructure for zero emission electric vehicle expansion. Senate Democrats invested in our students with major funding for education facilities at every level - from early childhood education and childcare facilities, to new housing for university students.



Healthcare for All Californians

Senate Democrats have expanded the state's Medical program to all Californians, regardless of immigration status. Previous Medical expansions provided coverage for seniors, children and young adults. The expansion in this year's budget will extend eligibility to adults aged 26 to 49, covering all ages. This change in eligibility makes California the first state in the nation to provide universal health care access and coverage.