

April 15, 2021

The Honorable Anthony J. Portantino
Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1 (Atkins) Sea Level Rise Mitigation and Adaptation Act of 2021 - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Portantino,

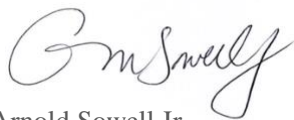
NextGen California respectfully requests your support of SB 1, which will establish the Sea Level Rise Mitigation and Adaptation Act of 2021. Specifically, the bill will create the California Sea Level Rise State and Regional Support Collaborative, strengthen the Coastal Commission’s authority and ability to plan for and mitigate against sea level rise, and increase the amount allocated for Environmental Justice grants from \$500,000 to \$2 million annually.

In a 2019 report on sea level rise, the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) estimated that California could experience up to 7 feet of average sea level rise by 2100 — with extreme storm and tidal events often causing even significantly higher levels. With millions of Californians living in coastal areas, especially low-income Californians, sea level rise will have a devastating effect on coastal communities, groundwater supplies, natural and working lands, our built environment, and all facets of our economy. To respond to this pending crisis, local governments as well as federal, regional and state agencies must work much more collaboratively to plan for and mitigate against the tremendously disrupting economic and social effects of sea level rise.

SB 1 will establish a comprehensive program to address sea level rise, ensuring that California’s local governments, low-income coastal neighborhoods, and our natural systems are more resilient to the threat of rising seas. SB 1 will also create an interagency collaborative overseen by the Secretaries of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA) and the Natural Resources Agency to coordinate intergovernmental activities related to sea level rise. Finally, the bill will make additional public funding available for sea level rise in the form of environmental justice grants for planning, outreach, and education in disadvantaged coastal communities.

NextGen California prioritizes policies and programs that address climate change, equity, and public health. For the above reasons, we respectfully request your “aye” vote on SB 1.

Sincerely,



Arnold Sowell Jr.
Executive Director, NextGen California