

NEWS

FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER
PAUL KORETZ
FIFTH DISTRICT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Alison.Simard@lacity.org
(213) 473-7005 (office) / (213) 374-6306 (cell)

LA Councilmember Paul Koretz's Environmental Policy Swan Song *Capping Decades of Leadership on Climate, Biodiversity and Environmental Justice*

November 3, 2022 – Los Angeles, CA – Today, the Los Angeles City Council's Energy, Climate Change, Environmental Justice and River Committee (ECCEJR) moved forward seven significant pieces of environmental legislation, which have been spearheaded by Councilmember Paul Koretz, including: 1) **Building decarbonization ordinance** - requiring new buildings be fossil-fuel free and have no natural gas hook-ups. 2) **Organics recycling ordinance** - requiring food and organic waste be recycled. 3) **Expanded Polystyrene ban ordinance** - a citywide ban on EPS, aka, Styrofoam. 4) **Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) Resolution** - acknowledging SMMC's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) trustee agency status to better protect the city's hillsides and biodiversity. 5) **Contracting Standards** - a policy to require all City contractors and subcontractors meet the City's green guidelines and examine the City's related carbon impacts. 6) **Healthy Soils/Regenerate LA** - moving forward the City's composting/healthy soils program and related career development efforts. 7) **LA City Biodiversity Index** - moving forward City's effort to better protect its biodiversity through City Department biodiversity plans. The items move on to full Council next.

"We've come a long way from a Department of Water and Power who said we'd never get off of coal power, from departments that didn't prioritize environmental justice and biodiversity protection, and from a previous Mayor and City Council who thought it was okay to disband the Environmental Affairs Department," **said Councilmember Paul Koretz**. "I'm proud of what my colleagues and I have accomplished in the past decade, moving the City forward and into a leadership role nationally and internationally on climate, environmental justice, and biodiversity protection. But as climate disasters continue to mount, as mass extinctions continue to spread, we must do more, faster."

Council President Paul Krekorian said of Paul Koretz during the meeting: "As Mr. Koretz is now in his final month on the Los Angeles City Council, this is yet another example of a legacy of [environmental] leadership that he's established over the course of decades. Way back in the day, Paul Koretz was one of the lonely voices in the wilderness demanding that this [EPS ban] be done, really bending the arc of the discussion around waste, and now the rest of the world is catching up with his vision. I think all of us owe him a debt of gratitude for the persistent, relentless leadership that he's shown on this and other issues when the going seemed tough."

For the past decade, Councilmember Koretz has been the only constant member of the City Council's Energy, Climate Change, Environment Justice and River Committee. In addition to the items passed today, he was the first City Councilmember to sign on to Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign and successfully advocated for LA's Department of Water and Power to begin moving off of coal power and toward 100% renewable energy, an effort which led directly to the 2020 demolition of the Navajo Generating Plant. He has been the lead (cont.)

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Koretz Press Release – 11-3-22 Koretz Environmental Swan Song (Page 2/2)

or co-lead on numerous pieces of legislation that have profoundly increased the City’s response to the climate, water, and biodiversity crises, including the creation of the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office; the pending citywide ban on neighborhood oil drilling; the plastic bag ban and utensils-upon-request effort; closing down the San Onofre Generating Station; transforming Hyperion Water Treatment Plant to Operation: Next recycled water plant; the LA City Biodiversity Index and initiative; wildlife habitat protections through a wildlife corridors ordinance and facilitating open space acquisitions; Regenerate LA, the healthy soil initiative; and creating or hiring numerous vital positions within the City administration, including the Departmental Chief Sustainability Officers, the Petroleum Administrator, the City Forest Officer, the Climate Emergency Commission, and Ecologists in both the City Planning Department and the Bureau of Sanitation.

“This is another historic day in LA for environmental protection,” **continued Paul Koretz.** “Under Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell’s able leadership as chair of ECCEJR, we have continually moved forward some of the most important, most forward-looking pieces of legislation, some of which were previously stalled, including the expanded polystyrene ban today. I am so grateful for his environmental leadership.”

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