

Power (to the People) Lunch

Action Sheet for September 19, 2019

(Suggestions Prepared by Elizabeth Conner)

SHEET 1

ACTION 1: Protect Alaska's Wildlife Refuge from Oil & Gas Drilling

The Union of Concerned Scientists says: "In order to effectively address global warming, we must significantly reduce the amount of heat-trapping emissions we are putting into the atmosphere."

Meanwhile, a provision buried in the 2017 Republican "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" mandated that the coastal plain of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) be opened to fossil fuel companies for oil and gas drilling. Congress originally banned fossil fuel development in the ANWR in 1980. The ANWR consists of 19.2 million acres of pristine land in Alaska. The Refuge's coastal plain is birthing ground to herds of caribou, a staple for indigenous tribes in the area, along with home to polar bears, muskoxen, wolves, brown bears, wolverines, arctic foxes, and more than 200 bird species. The general public overwhelmingly opposes the reopening of ANWR to oil and gas drilling.

Representative Huffman (D-CA) introduced the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act, H.R. 1146, to amend the 2017 Republican tax bill and repeal the entire ANWR oil and gas provision. On September 12, his bill passed the House by 225-193. Let's thank Rep. Huffman for introducing this important legislation. Let's also contact Senators Feinstein and Harris to ask that they introduce similar legislation in the Senate to prevent the leasing of Alaska's protected coastal lands to fossil fuel companies for their own use and development.

Call:

Sen. Feinstein (D-CA): D.C. Office: **(202) 224-3841**; SF: **(415) 393-0707**; LA: **(310) 914-7300**

Sen. Harris (D-CA): D.C. Office: **(202) 224-3553**; LA: **(213) 894-5000**; Sacramento: **(916) 448-2787**

Hi, my name is __, a constituent from [zip]. I'm calling to ask Senator ___ sponsor legislation to protect the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Coastal Plain from oil and gas drilling. I am hoping she will introduce a bill in the Senate similar to HR 1146, the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act, which just passed the House. Can you tell me if Senator ___ would be willing to introduce this legislation? Thank you for speaking with me.

Rep. Huffman (D-CA): D.C. Office: **(202) 225-5161**; Eureka: **(707) 407-3585**; Ukiah: **(707) 671-7449**

Hi, my name is __, a constituent from [zip]. I'm calling to thank Rep. Huffman for sponsoring HR 1146, the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act. We need to do all we can to fight climate change caused by carbon emissions and this is an important piece. Thanks for taking my message.

Write a postcard or email:

Sen Dianne Feinstein (D-CA): 331 Hart Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20510

www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-me

Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA): 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

www.harris.senate.gov/contact/email

Suggested postcard or email script for Senators Harris and Feinstein:

Dear Honorable __, Please sponsor legislation in the Senate to protect the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Coastal Plain from oil and gas drilling, similar to HR 1146 which just passed the House. Thank you, (name and zip code).

Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA): 1406 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

huffman.house.gov/contact/email-me

Dear Honorable ____, Thank you for sponsoring HR 1146, the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act. We need to do all we can to fight climate change caused by carbon emissions and this is an important piece. Thanks for taking my message.

Action 2: Tell RCEA to Get Biomass Out of Our Energy Mix

[Thank you to Dr. Wendy Ring of 350.org for prepping most of this sheet.]

The Redwood Community Action Agency (RCEA) is currently updating its plans for Humboldt County's electricity mix through 2030 via a document called the Comprehensive Action Plan for Energy (CAPE). The CAPE draft says RCEA will continue contracting with local biomass power plants through 2030. **These plants burn sawmill waste and emit close to 400,000 tons of CO2's every year, which is equivalent to doubling the number of cars in the county.** RCEA considers biomass carbon neutral and renewable, but with the world's scientists warning we have only 11 years to avoid a climate catastrophe, we can't emit hundreds of thousands of tons of CO2 each year and wait decades for trees to grow.

In March of this year, RCEA voted to reach 100% clean and renewable energy by 2025 and to **let the community decide if biomass should be included as clean energy**. Now, RCEA has decided by itself that biomass is clean in proposing that it continue to part of our energy mix into the future. **Humboldt's 30+ year old biomass plants have the oldest and dirtiest biomass technology. They pollute more than coal, emitting over a ton of fine particulates each week.** These tiny particles pass from the lungs into the bloodstream, increasing asthma attacks, heart attacks, cancer, and premature death.

Plant owners say they have no intention of upgrading to make their plants pollute less. Mill operators say we have to buy biomass energy because there is no other market for their waste. There are other ways to deal with mill waste: re-purposing as mulch and animal bedding, composting, and compressing wood chips into pallets, but they won't develop such alternatives or take responsibility until we stop paying them premium prices to burn it.

RCEA is accepting **comments from the public on the Preliminary CAPE through September 20, 2019**, and there will be an opportunity to provide comments on a Complete Draft CAPE in October 2019. Learn more about the plan and process at <https://redwoodenergy.org/>. Let's comment on RCEA's Preliminary CAPE plan and let them know we don't want biomass as part of Humboldt's energy future.

Email a comment to RCEA at: EnergyPlan2019@RedwoodEnergy.org
[Comments need to be sent by email to be considered]

"Talking" points:

- The most important thing to say: Biomass is not clean energy. The CAPE update should include a plan to get off biomass by 2025.
- RCEA should make mitigating climate change its first priority in choosing where we buy electricity. Biomass will contribute to climate change in the short time we have left to act.
- Biomass plants burn sawmill waste and **emit close to 400,000 tons of CO2's every year, which is equivalent to doubling the number of cars in the county.**
- Dirty local energy should not get preference or non competitive pricing compared to clean energy, regardless of where it is generated.
- By 2030, more options will exist and prices for clean energy and storage will be lower. Don't lock us into biomass.

Suggested script 1:

Thank you for taking comment on RCEA's CAPE. I'm concerned about the biomass component of the plan because our biomass is not clean energy. The plants are over 30 years old and emit way too many emissions. I hope RCEA will update the plan to get the county off biomass by 2025. Thank you, [name,address or email]

Suggested script 2:

Thank you for taking my comment on RCEA's Climate Action Plan. Since the local biomass plants emit almost 400,000 tons of CO2's every year, which is equivalent to doubling the number of cars in the county, this hardly seems like the clean and renewable energy future we need. With scientists saying that we have only 11 years until a climate catastrophe, it is the wrong choice to continue using a source of energy that emits this much CO2, especially since other choices are and will become available. Thank you, [name and address or email]

SHEET 2

Action 3: Write Debate Moderators with Questions about Democracy

On October 15-16, the Democratic candidates will face off in a fourth presidential debate, hosted by CNN and the New York Times. It will be moderated by CNN anchors Erin Burnett and Anderson Cooper, and Marc Lacey, National Editor of the NYT. Although 77% of registered voters say that “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the country, previous debate moderators haven't asked them a single question about this issue which clearly threatens our democracy.

Debate moderators want to ask questions they know voters care about. It's up to us to show them that viewers at home want answers on fixing our broken political system. Allying with several national organizations, including RepresentUs, let's contact the debate moderators to let them know we want them to ask the candidates how they plan to curb the influence of money in politics.

CONTACT CNN

Send CNN a text: simply text the word CNN, put a space, and then include your news tip. Text it to 55333.

Suggested text: “CNN 77% of registered voters say that “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the country. Please have CNN moderators ask the Democratic Presidential candidates how they would end corruption during the Oct 15 debate, and hold them accountable for straightforward responses.”

Call in to ‘news tip line’: 404-827-1500, select option 1 to leave a recorded message. Speak clearly.

Suggested message: *“Hi my name is ___ and this isn't so much a story idea but a request for CNN Moderators Anderson Cooper and Erin Burnett to ask the candidates how they plan to reduce the power of special interests during the upcoming Oct 15-16 Democratic Presidential debate. 77% of registered voters say that “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the country, yet no questions about this have been asked at the previous debates.”* [It's a good idea to include your name, and a phone number at the end of the message so they know you are a real person.]

Write a feedback comment to: <http://www.cnn.com/feedback> Go to the form, fill in initial thoughts (required) and then write out your comment:

Suggested initial thoughts: “CNN Moderators should ask Presidential candidates about how to get money out of politics in next debate.” OR “Why aren't CNN moderators asking Democratic candidates about corruption and the influence of special interests?” OR “CNN: Please help us understand how the Democratic candidates for President will work to end the influence of special interests in our country; it's undermining our democracy.”

Suggested comment:

“Hi my name is ___ and my feedback is that moderators of recent Democratic Presidential debates, including those from CNN, did not ask any questions about ending the power of special interests. 77% of registered voters say that “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the country, yet no questions about this have been asked at the previous debates. My request is that during the upcoming October 15-16 Democratic Presidential debate CNN moderators Anderson Cooper and Erin Burnett ask the candidates how they will fix America's corruption problem and hold them accountable by demanding a straightforward answer. Thank you”

OR

“Hi my name is ___ and my feedback is that 77% of registered voters say that “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the country, yet CNN debate moderators have not asked about this issue in previous debates. I hope that CNN's Anderson Cooper and Erin Burnett will ask these questions when they moderate the next Democratic Presidential debate on October 15-16 and push for a responsive answer from the candidates. Thank you.”

[Include your phone number at the end of the comment so they can see you are a real person.]

(continued on other side)

(Write Debate Moderators with Questions about Democracy, continued from other side)

CONTACT THE NEW YORK TIMES

Marc Lacey, National Editor, one of October 15-16 Democratic Presidential debate moderators

EMAIL: marclacey@nytimes.com

Suggested email to Marc Lacey:

Dear Mr. Lacey,

I write to you as one of the moderators of the upcoming Oct 15-16 Democratic Presidential Debate.

77% of registered voters say that “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the country, yet no questions about this issue have been asked at the previous debates.

I urge you to ask the presidential candidates how they will fix America's corruption problem, and hold them accountable by demanding straightforward answers. Americans deserve to know how each candidate plans, specifically, to address this matter.

Not meaning to be pushy or presumptuous, I offer the following questions (that a group of us brainstormed) for your consideration:

1. In the United States today the following are legal and routinely practiced: lobbyists write laws, then give money to politicians voting on them; politicians take money from the industries they regulate; politicians leave Congress to take lucrative jobs as lobbyists; and politicians give tax breaks and corporate welfare to their funders. As president, what specific steps would you take to fix America's corruption crisis and hold politicians accountable to the average American, not special interests?
2. 77% of registered voters say that “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the country. What, specifically will you do as president to reign in the power of special interests and restore confidence in American's political system?
3. Many legal scholars and others are concerned about the impact on American democracy of the Citizens United v. FEC case which ruled that corporations have the same free speech rights as individual citizens. Do you support the passage of a 28th Amendment to the US Constitution to unequivocally state that inalienable rights belong to human beings only, and that money is not a form of protected free speech under the First Amendment and can be regulated in political campaigns?

Thank you for your consideration, (Name, email, phone number)

TWITTER AT: @marclacey

Suggested twitter to Marc Lacey:

77% of voters say “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the US. Please ask the Presidential candidates how they would stop the influence of money in politics during the October debate. [note: 256 characters; 280 is limit]

Call the NYT feedback and story idea message line: 844-698-6397.

Email: nytnews@nytimes.com

Write the NYT at: The New York Times Company, 620 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10018

Suggested message for phone, email or postcard:

Hi, my name is _____. Please consider doing a story about how each of the Democratic Presidential candidates plan, specifically, to combat the influence of money in politics. 77% of voters say “reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is the most important issue facing the US, yet this question has not been asked at the debates or deeply covered by any media. Thank you, [your name, and phone, if you'd like a call.]

[NOTE: add more info from above if desired, and adjust script depending on whether it's email, card or call. An email can contain more.]

SHEET 3

Action 4: Support Ranked Choice Voting in California

A lot of good work is being done all over the country to usher in Rank Choice Voting. Great news: here in California, SB 212 just passed both houses with clear majorities and is now being sent to Governor Newsom to sign. SB 212 will allow all local governments to use Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) if they decide it is best for their jurisdiction.

From Ballotopedia: “A **ranked-choice voting** system (RCV) is an electoral system in which **voters rank** candidates by preference on their ballots. If a candidate wins a majority of first-preference **votes**, she or he is declared the winner.... The process is repeated until a candidate wins an outright majority”.

From FairVote: “Ranked choice voting has a number of benefits, which include rewarding candidates who can gain broad support, incentivizing positive campaigning, and providing voters with more choices. In multi-winner districts, RCV promotes fairer and more inclusive representation than winner-take-all methods.”

Let’s thank Senator Mike McGuire and Assemblymember Jim Wood for their ‘yes’ vote, and let Governor Newsom know we want him to sign the bill.

Call or send postcard:

California Senator Mike McGuire (D):

Call: Eureka: (707 445-6508; San Rafael: **(415) 479-6612**; Santa Rosa: **(707) 576-2771**

Write: Capitol Office: 1303 10th Street, Room 5061; Sacramento, CA 95814; **(916) 651-4002**

Email: senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov

*Hi, I’m a constituent from [City, ZIP] and I’m calling to thank **Senator McGuire** for voting yes on SB 212 to allow local jurisdictions to use Rank Choice Voting in their elections if they choose. Thank you for taking my message.*

California Assemblymember Jim Wood (D):

Call: Humboldt/Del Norte/Trinity: **(707) 445-7014**; Sonoma: **(707) 576-2526**;

Sacramento: **(916) 319-2002** [when it goes to voicemail, press 9 to comment.]

Write: Capitol Office: State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249-0002;

Email: go to: <https://a02.asmdc.org/> and hit the “Write to Jim” tab on upper right of page.

*Hi, I’m a constituent from [City, ZIP], and I’m calling to thank **Assemblymember Wood** for voting yes on SB 212 to allow local jurisdictions to use Rank Choice Voting in their elections if they choose. Thank you for taking my message.*

Governor Gavin Newsom (D)

Call: **(916) 445-2841**

Write: 1303 10th Street, Suite 1173, Sacramento, CA 95814

Send comment: <https://govapps.gov.ca.gov>

Hi, I’m a constituent from [City, ZIP], and I’m calling to urge Governor Newsom to sign SB 212 to allow local jurisdictions to use Rank Choice Voting in their elections if they choose. This will save money for local governments and has shown to increase voter participation. Thank you for taking my message.

Action 5: Advocate for Secure US Elections

As you know, there is clear evidence that US elections are subject to digital attacks from internal or external parties. And, at least 25% of voting machines in the US do not have paper ballot back-up. Since California is one of the states that has both an electronic and paper record for all voting machines, we’ll concentrate on the federal system. **H.R. 2660 or S.1540** comprise the Election Security Act of 2019 which solve these issues by requiring paper back-up for all US voting machines and by providing financial support for new voting machines. The 2020 elections are less than 60 weeks away, and these laws take months to adopt and change, so we need to act now. **Let’s join others across the country and let our Reps know they must act to protect the accuracy of US election results.**

Senators Feinstein and Harris are both co-sponsors of S. 1540, so let's call and thank them. Senator Feinstein is on the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, where the bill is currently languishing, so let's also ask her to encourage the committee chair (Sen. Roy Blunt, R-MO) to advance it. Let's also call Rep. Huffman and ask him to co-sponsor H.R. 2660 and try to move it forward.

Senator Feinstein (D-CA)

Call: D.C. Office: (202) 224-3841; SF: (415) 393-0707; LA: (310) 914-7300

*Hi, my name is __, a constituent from [zip]. I'm calling to **thank Senator Feinstein for co-sponsoring S. 1540, the Election Security Act.** I also want to ask the Senator to do all she can to encourage Chair Blunt to bring the bill to a vote in the Senate Rules and Administration Committee. **Can you tell me what if Senator Feinstein would be willing to do this?** Thank you for speaking with me.*

Write: 331 Hart Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20510

Email: www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-me

Dear Senator Feinstein, Thank you for co-sponsoring S. 1540, the Election Security Act to protect our election from digital attacks. Please do all you can to encourage Chair Blunt to bring the bill to a vote in the Senate Rules and Administration Committee. Thank you, (name and zip code).

Senator Harris (D-CA):

Call: D.C. Office: (202) 224-3553; Los Angeles: (213) 894-5000; Sacramento: (916) 448-2787

*Hi, my name is __, a constituent from [zip]. I'm calling to **thank Senator Harris for co-sponsoring S. 1540, the Election Security Act to protect our election from digital attacks.** **Can you tell me what Sen Harris is doing to help get this bill passed?** Thank you for speaking with me.*

Write: 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

Email: www.harris.senate.gov/contact/email

Dear Senator Harris, Thank you for co-sponsoring S. 1540, the Election Security Act to protect our election from digital attacks. Please do all you can to encourage Chair Blunt to bring the bill to a vote in the Senate Rules and Administration Committee. Thank you, (name and zip code).

Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA): D.C. (202) 225-5161; Eureka: (707) 407-3585; Ukiah: (707) 671-7449

*Hi, my name is __ from [zip]. I'm calling because I'd like **Representative Huffman** to co-sponsor H.R. 2660, the Election Security Act to protect our elections from digital attacks by having paper back up. **Can you tell me if he would be willing to co-sponsor this bill?** Thank you for speaking with me.*

Write: 11406 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Email: huffman.house.gov/contact/email-me

Dear Representative Huffman, Please co-sponsor H.R. 2660, the Election Security Act to protect our elections from digital attacks by providing paper back up. Thank you, (name and zip code).

Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO), Chair, Senate Rules and Administration Committee: (202) 224-5721

Hi, I'm calling to ask Senator Blunt, as Chair of the Senate Rules & Administration Committee, to bring S. 1540, the Election Security Act, up for a committee vote as soon as possible. I'm concerned about the accuracy of our election results, and paper ballots will help. Thanks for taking my message.