



CALIFORNIA LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS 2015 LEGISLATIVE RESULTS



2015 was another historic year for California's environment. Thanks to you, the work of CLCV and the state's environmental community paid off in big legislative wins for landmark environmental laws. Find a full review of 2015 in the *California Environmental Scorecard* at ecovote.org/scorecard November 2.

WINS: PASSED AND SIGNED INTO LAW

CLIMATE PROGRESS: SB 350 (de León) will mandate an increase of California's renewable energy use to 50% by 2030 and a doubling of energy efficiency over that same timeline. **SB 350** is a climate change bill of historic proportions with aggressive targets. However, the bill was stripped of a provision to cut California's petroleum usage by 50% in the next 15 years due to pressure from the oil industry, which spent many millions of dollars on a deceptive lobbying and media campaign, and, ultimately, the work of a group of oil industry-friendly Assembly Democrats.

BAN ON POLLUTING MICROBEADS: Many personal care products, including some soaps, gels, and toothpastes, contain plastic microbeads. These tiny plastic particles offer dubious benefits but are a big environmental problem. As they are flushed down drains, they're becoming more and more pervasive in our waterways and in the ocean, where they absorb toxins and bioaccumulate up the food chain, posing a serious health threat to both people and wildlife. **AB 888** (Bloom) will phase out the use of plastic microbeads in personal care products in favor of the many biodegradable alternatives that exist.



AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION: The New Motor Voter Act, **AB 1461** (Gonzalez), will automatically register to vote eligible voters who obtain or update a driver's license. More than 6.5 million Californians are currently eligible to vote but not registered. This bill will empower more voters to hold elected officials accountable; when more people vote, the environment wins.

BAN ON IVORY SALES: African elephants and rhinos are being slaughtered at an unprecedented rate—approximately 96 elephants every day—and could be driven to extinction by poaching, fueled increasingly by terrorist groups raising millions of dollars from selling poached tusks and horns. California is the second largest ivory retail market in the country and demand in California is contributing to poaching and terrorism in Africa. **AB 96** (Atkins) will close the enforcement loophole in California's decades-old elephant ivory sales ban and prohibit the trade in rhinoceros horns.



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WINS: PASSED AND SIGNED INTO LAW, CONTINUED

COAL DIVESTMENT: SB 185 (de León) will require California's public pension funds, the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS), to divest from holdings in thermal coal. Coal is America's dirtiest energy source, and California is the first state in the nation to pass a state-level law divesting from any form of fossil fuel.



RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR ALL: In California, low-income families spend a third of their income on utility bills, while average California households spend less than 5% of their income on utility bills. **AB 693** (Eggman) creates the Solar CARE program to bring renewable energy to tenants' rooftops. It will help shift low-income communities from relying on dirty energy to benefiting from renewable energy in three ways: reducing carbon pollution, saving money on utility bills, and creating well-paying jobs.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: STALLED IN THE LEGISLATURE

Since 2015 was the first year of a two-year legislative session, in 2016 we can pick up where we left off with the bills that didn't make it to the governor's desk. Take action to support strong environmental laws at act.ecovote.org.

STOPPING POLLUTION FROM INJECTION WELLS: This year, state regulators disclosed that more than 2,000 oil and natural gas extraction and waste disposal sites violated federal clean water standards. In response, legislators wrote **AB 356** (Williams) and **SB 248** (Pavley), bills which would have updated the state's Underground Injection Control (UIC) rules to require disclosure of chemicals used in well treatments or injections, ensure that oil and gas projects do not contaminate aquifers containing water suitable for drinking and irrigation, and require the shutdown of illegal injection wells if regulators fail to shut them down according to the existing compliance schedule. California's oil lobby, notably the Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA), predictably led the opposition to these bills. **AB 356** failed in the Assembly, and **SB 248** was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee, but both bills can come back next year.



CLIMATE PROTECTION GOALS: While **SB 350** was a landmark climate victory, other bills did not fare as well. **SB 32** (Pavley) would have set greenhouse gas reduction limits to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, consistent with the level climate scientists warn will be required to avoid catastrophic climate disruptions. The bill was defeated 30-35 on the Assembly floor; we expect the Assembly to reconsider **SB 32** in 2016.

PROTECTING AGAINST OIL SPILLS: Oil spills have caused untold damage to our coast, ocean, and wildlife. **SB 788** (McGuire) would have provided permanent protection from repeated attempts to extract oil from a State Marine Protected area near the Santa Barbara Channel. The bill stalled in the Assembly Appropriations Committee; stay tuned for more opportunities to take action on this and other bills at www.ecovote.org.