

**Testimony of Mr. Jim Gonzalez  
Proponent, and Chair, Yes on 7  
Californians for Solar and Clean Energy  
Before the Joint Legislative Hearing on Proposition 7  
September 10, 2008  
Sacramento, California**

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members, ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Jim Gonzalez. I am the Proponent and Campaign Chair of Yes on Proposition 7.

I am joined today by the Senior Counsel of Californians for Solar and Clean Energy, John Thiella, by our Manatt Law Firm counsel, Fred Main, and by our Prop. 7 campaign organizers. We are proud to be here with S. David Freeman, who is truly the “David” in our David and Goliath story.

I spent twelve years in San Francisco’s City Hall as a senior member of the Mayor’s staff, and as an elected Supervisor.

In those positions, it was my privilege and responsibility to review the operations of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which operates the Hetch Hetchy reservoirs, aqueducts, and hydroelectric power systems which generate power in four power plants, and conveys that power through 165 miles of high transmission power lines for sale to the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation District and to PG&E.

I know quite a bit about what it takes to generate and deliver power to ratepayers and consumers. I begin with these comments, because some spokespersons for the utility companies have said I don’t know anything about energy or the environment. Please know, like my Mayan ancestors, I am pretty good at mathematics and planning.

Over 700,000 California citizens signed the petition to place Proposition 7 on the November ballot. They did so because they recognized the twin crises facing our state and our nation: global warming and our fatal addiction to fossil fuels, which has made true energy independence an ever more elusive goal.

We all have heard of the work of the International Panel on Climate Change, and the work of Vice President Al Gore in educating the world about the dangers of climate change and global warming. Governor Schwarzenegger and this Legislature recognized these dangers when they enacted AB 32, which set targets for the reduction of global warming gasses, carbon dioxide and methane into California’s atmosphere. There are studies on the State of California’s official climate change website which outline a

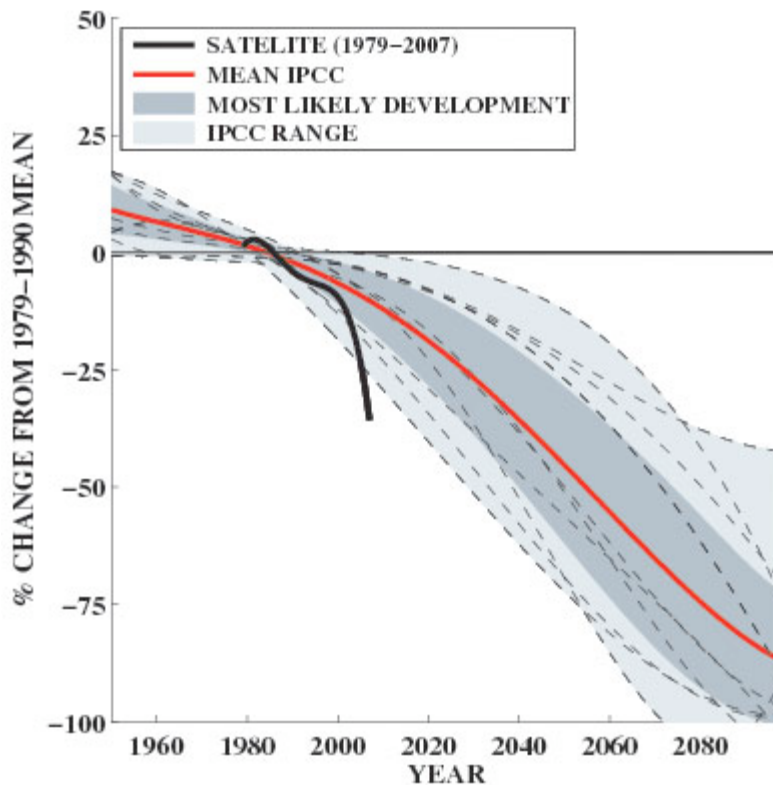
dire future for our state's water supply and snow pack, as well as continuing dangers of mega wildfires; sea rise; and coastal and Delta inundations; threats to agriculture; and health risks due to extreme heat events.

Our Co-Authors of Prop. 7, Senator Martha Escutia, John Thiella, and Bill Zimmerman, and our ballot argument signers, including Senate President pro Tem John Burton, Dolores Huerta, Congressman Pete McCloskey and Dr. Donald Aitken, took these global warming crisis warnings seriously, and are working hard to pass Prop. 7.

But there are even more dire wake up calls. There is recent evidence that the Arctic Ice Cap is melting rapidly. A melting event that was projected to occur in 50 to 100 years is occurring right now before our eyes. Satellite images do not lie.

Here is a chart that reflects the projections of the IPCC on probable Arctic Ice Cap melt, and the satellite images that show that these projections were far too conservative. There has actually been a dangerous acceleration in just the last few years. This chart was prepared by the University of Bergen in Norway and illustrates graphically why we should be alarmed.

### Great Arctic Ice Melt of 2007



*Chart is courtesy of Dr. A. Sorteberg, Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, University of Bergen, Norway*

However, many are not alarmed enough. Our critics say they are alarmed. Yet their opposition to Prop. 7 is based on micro-technical criticisms, which should remind us of the story of the blind man and the elephant.

The most important issue facing any of us here today is whether there will be a secure energy future for our families, our children, and for future California generations yet unborn, or whether global warming and climate change will disrupt and destroy our state.

The inconvenient truth is that 40% of global warming pollution is produced by burning fossil fuels for electricity generation. It is the utilities' dirty little secret.

California is the world's 16<sup>th</sup> largest global warming polluter. The single biggest and effective thing we can do about global warming, in the words of Al Gore, is not just to change a light bulb, but to change laws as well, and change the way we generate electricity.

Proposition 7 is not another conference, academic panel, or public policy hearing. Proposition 7 is the game changer. It enacts the first law in the world to solve directly, at the large utility-scale level, the single largest cause of global warming pollution.

Proposition 7 will create 370,000 new high wage construction jobs, and make us energy independent – with clean renewable energy, right here in California.

Just as California became the world center of the IT (Information Technology) revolution. So too, with the passage of Prop. 7, California will become the world headquarters of the energy technology revolution – the “ET” revolution. We need to take this step now, before India and China become the ET pioneers and the world looks elsewhere for their green economy.

Proposition 7 will build large-scale solar and clean energy plants in California's vast desert, and make sure that this clean, home grown energy will never raise our electricity bills more than 3 percent.

It does no harm, and respects all environmental laws and regulations, including CEQA, NEPA, and the Desert Protection Act.

It will, however, require the utilities to practice what they preach and join countless efforts by individual Californians to really stop global warming.

Prop. 7 requires the utilities to deliver clean power on a large scale. Sadly, they simply don't want to do that. That is why PG&E and Southern California Edison are spending \$23 million on television ads to scare and confuse voters about Proposition 7.

All of my 30 years of experience in and out of government tells me that Proposition 7 is the right thing to do.

But it is our consciences, and those of the community organizers present today, which has led me into this Legislative Hearing Room today.

Energy markets toss and turn, and the drumbeats of war are ever-present – all because of our deadly addiction to foreign oil.

And, \$40 million is being spent on television by the dirty coal lobby to convince the gullible that burning coal can be done “clean”. What a fraud coal-sequestration is!

The siren song of nuclear power is sung yet again; and 30 plants are on the drawing board in the U.S. The French Government-owned company, Areva, is all over television with their “talk about it, talk about it” commercial about so-called “Pure Energy” -- without any discussion of the dangers of nuclear waste disposal.

On another front, sadly, the energy discussion now seems to be all about drilling. “Drill, drill, drill,” say those who up until a few weeks ago said that we could not drill our way to energy independence.

The imminent threat of global warming seems to have been cast aside by even the most passionate environmental advocates.

Some so-called “environmental leaders” even have the unmitigated gall to oppose Prop. 7 after they served as cheerleaders for the utilities' failed deregulation scheme that led to the energy crisis and power failures throughout California.

Why Proposition 7?

Because delay will kill us, and our children, and our grandchildren – either through climate change directly, or through the conflicts that climate change can spawn, or the wars that may be waged over fossil fuels if we don't address our addiction to fossil fuels and foreign oil.

The technologies contemplated in Proposition 7 – solar, wind, geothermal, biomass – all work today. They are “off the shelf” technologies – not exotic schemes like carbon sequestration for coal plants, or nuclear waste storage, or so-called “environmentally-friendly” offshore drilling.

The goals of Proposition 7 – 50% renewable electricity for California by 2025 – are all achievable. In fact, they are modest goals.

The technical details of Proposition 7 make sense. It is very carefully written. It can be successfully implemented through the administrative process.

And, its total cost to California is \$3.4 million per year – fees for reviews done by the Energy Commission and state agencies.

Proposition 7 is visionary and practical. We should all support it.

In closing, I want to especially thank the Community Environmental Council of Santa Barbara for their special leadership, honesty, and support.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Vote Yes on Prop. 7 – The Solar and Clean Energy Act of 2008

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