

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SACRAMENTO COUNTY

CENTRAL COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

5/9/2019 – Curtis Hall, Sacramento

RESOLUTION 2019-10

Demanding that PG&E Improves Infrastructure Safety

WHEREAS, Climate change has increased wildfires and caused numerous negative impacts, such as tens of thousands of acres burned, thousands of homes and businesses burned, hundreds of lives lost, thousands of climate refugees seeking shelter amidst a housing crisis, millions of dollars spent in fighting fires, and causing extreme anxiety throughout its sphere of influence, the majority of these fires are ignited by utilities equipment failings especially by PG&E as in the 2014-2016 timeframe when 1,551 wildfires were started by PG&E equipment, 351 by Southern California Edison, and 110 by San Diego Gas & Electric; and

WHEREAS, Rather than expedite upgrades to ancient equipment with 60-year-old bare wire conductors, PG&E is ramping up their enhanced vegetation management program from ensuring the required 4-foot radial clearance around distribution lines to demanding home owners allow a 12 foot clearance earth to sky and the removal of tall hazard trees up to 200 feet away, which often necessitates the removal of healthy trees causing the loss of carbon sequestration, increased erosion and risk of flooding, damage to property and communities, loss of wildlife habitat, and increased fire risk from wind tunnels, flammable invasive plants, and hotter local microclimates, and will eventually result in the loss of 100 million trees throughout California as estimated by PG&E; and

WHEREAS, Infrastructure improvements are available to provide long-lasting and effective protection from wildfire—including replacing weak, hazardous, bare wire with reinforced, insulated, covered conductors, and installing high impedance arc fault interrupters that cut power within seconds of a break—thereby providing the most effective safety improvements and reducing the need for any enhanced vegetation management;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Democratic Party of Sacramento County calls on the Governor, California Legislature, and the California Public Utilities Commission to require PG&E to provide maps of all their known faulty or unmaintained equipment that can result in fires including the extent of bare wires and lack of arc fault interrupters, so that upgrades can be prioritized within the high fire hazard zones, and to expedite infrastructure improvements, long-term effective protection, rather than allowing continued environmental degradation from unproven and unnecessary enhanced vegetation management, specifically removal of healthy, mature trees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Democratic Party of Sacramento County calls on the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, and on all city councils within Sacramento County, to adopt ordinances requiring PG&E to upgrade bare wire to covered conductors and to make other equipment changes necessary to make the public safe from wildfire—as allowed by Public Resource Code Section 4117.

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