



December 15, 2020

Comments on the County Climate Action Commissioners Court Item

Good afternoon Judge Hidalgo, Commissioners, and staff. My name is Harrison Humphreys and I represent Air Alliance Houston. I am speaking today on the climate action assessment item.

Our organization, Air Alliance Houston, appreciates you advancing this item today, Commissioner Ellis. As I'm sure you are all aware, climate change and its catastrophic effects will continue to have a significant impact on our region unless we take extraordinary measures soon. The Texas coast has been witness to an incredible amount of storms that are increasing in frequency and severity; this will be just one product of the continued changing climate. Extreme heat, intense flooding, rising sea levels, and potential food shortages will impact our region and state unless we act now.

Our organization supports the focus being paid to equity and environmental justice. These are important factors and should be centered in this process. Having worked on the City of Houston Climate Action Plan, I feel it's imperative that we ensure the County's plan is focused on climate *justice*, not just climate action. Frontline communities have borne the brunt of the health and safety risks caused by industry and repairing the harm done to these communities over the decades should be a focus of this plan.

On that note, I would ask that this plan be bold and aggressive in its approach to climate action. As I mentioned, our organization contributed to the drafting process for the Houston CAP and are currently working with the City on implementation. Having been part of the process from the start, I can say that the Houston CAP has fallen short in that it did not attempt to address industry and its contribution to the climate crisis. The County's plan needs to take bold action in addressing the very roots of climate change, the carbon economy. We can't delude ourselves into thinking that superficial measures will sufficiently stem our carbon emissions; we need to confront the reality that our energy economy is also the greatest source of climate change-inducing emissions. We simply can't afford to continue at this rate. Navigating this challenge will be difficult, but our organization firmly believes that you, Judge and Commissioners, and your staff have the capability to create a bold, equitable climate action plan.

Air Alliance Houston supports this study and we look forward to working with you and your staff, Commissioner.