



Monday, September 27, 2021

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## CA Business Leaders Speak Out for Infrastructure Bill






Climate scientists say drought, megafires and air pollution are becoming more extreme and more common because of climate change. (Hotblack/Morguefile)

 **Suzanne Potter, Producer**

 **Contact**

 **Why you can trust Public News Service**

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SACRAMENTO, Calif. - The U.S. House of Representatives is supposed to vote this week on President Joe Biden's Build Back Better infrastructure bill, which contains significant resources to fight climate change.

Now a group called [Business Forward](#) is highlighting the costs that fires, floods and extreme heat linked to climate change have imposed on American companies.

Business Forward president Jim Doyle said business leaders have direct knowledge of the price we're paying for climate change now.

"Severe weather and extreme temperatures are spiking commodity prices, disrupting supply chains, damaging plants and equipment, and messing with consumer demand for their products," said Doyle.

The infrastructure bill would hasten the switch to renewable energy.

Doyle noted that in 2019, California imported 80% of the fossil fuels it consumed. He claimed that by switching to renewables in-state, the Golden State could create a \$79 billion opportunity to buy local energy.

[According to Cal Fire](#), more than 7,600 blazes have consumed more than 2.4 million acres in the Golden State this year. Some estimates put the damage as high as \$17 billion.

Todd Vogel co-owns Eastside Sports in Bishop and said all the smoke has led to a big drop in the number of tourists.

"We're completely dependent on people traveling here," said Vogel. "It's very much an outdoor-based tourism economy dependent on backpacking and fishing and skiing. As we feel more of the consequences of climate change, particularly with the fire seasons, we've seen visitation drop off dramatically."

Business Forward has launched a \$1.2 million radio ad campaign this week - aimed at pressuring lawmakers in swing districts to help pass the infrastructure bill, including Rep. Jim Costa - D-Fresno.

References: [2021 Fire Season Outlook Cal Fire 2021](#)

[Business Forward website](#) [Business Forward Foundation 2021](#)

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