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For Immediate Release

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Sierra Club Statement on Passage of Texas Proposition 7

Austin, TX - On November 7, around 9 percent of registered Texas voters cast ballots in favor of Texas Proposition 7, enacting a change to the state constitution. The ballot language read: “The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas energy fund to support the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities.”

Dave Cortez, Director of the Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter, said, “We understand why Texans would vote for a proposition that was cleverly written to sound like a cure-all solution to our grid problems. Our grid instability is real. But Prop 7, which offers up to \$10 billion of taxpayer money to private corporations for the construction of new, polluting gas plants at the exclusion of more sustainable solutions only props up an energy source that is responsible for the most power outages in winter and contributes to rapid warming and record-breaking heat waves in summer.

“Not only did Governor Greg Abbott sign the legislation that created Prop 7 [SB 2627], he also vetoed a bipartisan bill [SB 2453] that would have updated codes to make buildings more energy efficient – a far more cost-effective solution. It will take the better part of a decade to bring the gas plants funded by Prop 7 online. In the meantime, the Abbott-appointed members of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) are [trying to bring shuttered gas and coal plants back](#), which will pollute Texas communities and make our summers more unbearable. Abbott’s energy ‘solutions’ are pro-fossil fuel industry, not pro-Texan.”

Cyrus Reed, Conservation Director of the Sierra Club’s Lone Star Chapter, said, “We will continue to advocate for solutions that don’t make our energy problems worse in the long run. Energy efficiency programs could help thousands of Texans weatherize their homes so they don’t waste energy. Demand response programs should pay everyday Texans for reducing energy consumption. Small distributed energy resources like solar and battery storage can be aggregated and paid to help meet our energy needs. These solutions should be prioritized ahead of more fossil fuel power plants. Not only are these solutions more sustainable, they offer financial savings to regular folks instead of taxpayer-funded enrichment to the same private fossil fuel corporations that profited off Texans’ high electricity bills during Winter Storm Uri.

“The [American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy \(ACEEE\) identified 10 programs](#) that could reduce summer electricity-demand peaks by about 15,000 MW and winter peaks by about 25,300 MW through targeted investments over the next six years. Until the Public Utility Council of Texas (PUCT), ERCOT, and the Texas Legislature take the demand side and other customer-friendly solutions more seriously, Texas will continue to face emergency situations.”

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