Legislators reached the first deadline of the 2023-2024 legislative season last week—passage of bills out of their house of origin. As the name implies, this refers to Assembly bills working their way through the Assembly, and Senate bills moving through the Senate, culminating with floor votes which concluded last Friday, May 24th. This period is marked as the crossover, where the bills that passed off the floor of their house of origin, move to the other house for the review process to begin again.

A little more than 2,000 bills were introduced in both houses this session, which is about average. In the Assembly, 931 bills advanced out of 1520 total (61%). In the Senate, of the 639 bills introduced, 479 advanced (75%) according to a tally by Chris Micheli. Since this is the second year of a two-year session, some bills that were designated two-year bills last year are now making their way through the process.

Hundreds of these bills covered a range of environmental topics, sending them to various environmental policy committees. In the Assembly, bills with environmental designations often go to Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials, Natural Resources, or Utilities and Energy (and sometimes to all the above). In the Senate, bills that

have environmental impacts often go to Environmental Quality, Natural Resources and Water, or Energy, Utilities and Communication (and again, the bills can go to multiple committees). After policy committees, bills will go before their respective houses for a full vote.

While the budget deficit looms large, it has not stopped many important environmental issues from advancing, at least at this stage. Here are a few of the most talked about environmental impact bills that are advancing:

Senate Bills

Senator Monique Limon's SB 1036, Cleaning-up Voluntary Carbon Offsets, makes it unlawful to certify or issue voluntary carbon offsets "if the person knows or should know that the greenhouse gas reductions or greenhouse gas removal enhancements of the offset project related to the voluntary carbon offset are unlikely to be quantifiable, real, and additional." The bill passed despite a floor alert against it by two large environmental groups.

The California Fossil Fuel Divestment Act (SB 252) authored by Senator Lena Gonzalez, would prohibit investments of public employee retirement funds in fossil fuel companies. This would apply to new investments as well as renewing existing investments.

SB 1420, authored by Senator Anna Caballero seeks to streamline hydrogen production in the state. One aspect of the bill requires no less than 60% of the retail hydrogen produced or dispensed be qualified clean hydrogen by 2045.

Senator Josh Becker's SB 1374 restores the ability for utility customers with on-site solar generation to be credited for self-consuming that electricity in the same way as single-family homeowners, even when the solar generation and electricity consumption are split between separate meters on the same property. This would most notably apply to schools, apartment buildings, and farms.

Senator Caroline Menjivar's SB 1193 to phase out the sale of leaded airplane fuel passed on a party-line vote.

Senator Scott Wiener's SB 960 advanced with the goal of requiring all state highway projects overseen by Caltrans to include bicycling, pedestrian, and transit facilities

when feasible.

Assembly Bills

Assemblymember Laura Friedman's AB 1963 would prohibit paraquat dichloride. This bill has been supported by the Dolores Huerta Foundation, the Environmental Working Group, and others, to protect human health and the environment. "An EWG analysis published on March 27 shows paraquat is disproportionately sprayed in areas of the state inhabited by Latino farmworkers and their families, exacerbating environmental health risks for these communities."

Multiple bills advanced this session which seek to have cities and counties develop plans for meeting our climate goals. The Local Electrification Planning Act (AB 1176) by Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur requires cities and counties to develop plans identifying opportunities to expand electric vehicle charging to meet community needs, including disadvantaged communities and low-income households. The Pathway to Clean Energy Buildings (AB 593) by Assemblymember Matt Haney tasks cities and counties with adopting a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the building sector.

The Local Environmental Choice and Safety Act (AB 3233), authored by Assemblymember Dawn Addis, seeks to give local governments the authority to ban some oil and gas operations and extraction methods in their jurisdictions. It follows a state Supreme Court decision called *Chevron U.S.A. Inc. v. County of Monterey et al.* that had to do with local oil and gas phase out efforts. (You can read much more in this recent analysis from the UCLA Emmett Institute of that decision and AB 3233.)

Two additional oil well clean up bills also passed out of the Assembly and are now headed to the Senate. Assemblymember Gregg Hart's AB 1866 to clean up idle oil wells, and Assemblymember Isaac Bryan authored AB 2716, the Low-Producing Oil Well Accountability Act.

Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris' AB 2559 to streamline the EV charger permitting process passed with bipartisan support. The bill seeks to create a website to collect information on the permitting of EV service equipment and establish a working group.

Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan's AB 2236 passed, looking to expand the state's plastic bag ban to include the significantly thicker plastic bags now offered in stores.

Assemblymember Gail Pellerin's AB 2513 to require new gas stoves to come with a warning label about pollutants linked to respiratory illnesses also cleared the assembly.

Next steps

August 31, 2024, is the last day for each house to pass bills, marking the final recess of the 2024 legislative session. Included in this time is a summer recess, July 3rd-August 5th. The Governor will then have until September 30,2024 to sign or veto the bills before him. Stay tuned for my legislative wrap up later this year to see what environmental bills make it through to the Governor's desk to become law – or not!

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention one other legislative effort that is garnering lots of attention from lawmakers as we head into summer, and that the issue of a climate bond. In the Senate, SB 867, authored by Senators Ben Allen, Josh Becker, Anthony Portantino, and Henry Stern would, if approved by the voters, authorize funds to finance projects for items including "drought, flood, and water resilience, wildfire and forest resilience, coastal resilience, extreme heat mitigation, biodiversity and nature-based climate solutions, climate smart agriculture, park creation and outdoor access, and clean energy programs." In the Assembly, AB 1567, authored by Assemblymembers Eduardo Garcia, Wendy Carrillo, Damon Connolly, Laura Friedman, Diane Papan, Eloise Reyes, and Luz Rivas, would again, if approved by voters, authorize funds for projects including drought preparation, safe drinking water, wildlife prevention, clean energy, and extreme heat mitigation. Both passed their respective houses. We'll have to see what happens.

In the meantime, I would love to hear from you. What environmental bills are you following? Are there any particular environmental bills you're rooting for, or think should be spiked? Please share in the comments. As mentioned, I'll be back with a legislative wrap up. For now, enjoy the summer and have fun watching the rest of the legislative session play out.