



June 19, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Committee on Director Nominations
Arizona State Senate
1700 W Washington St
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Esteemed Senators,

We, the undersigned organizations representing Arizonans committed to limited government, individual liberty, economic prosperity and sane environmental policies to protect our beloved planet, write to express our deep concerns regarding the nomination of Karen Peters as Director of the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). Indeed, Ms. Peters' long career in public service is entirely disqualifying considering her radical ideological partisan track record. Her leadership in advancing aggressive climate policies during her tenure as Deputy City Manager at the City of Phoenix demonstrates a radical environmental agenda that is misaligned with Arizona's values and priorities. Specifically, her involvement in the city's [Climate Action Plan](#), the [C40 Cities program](#), and the [Deadline 2020 Climate Cities Report](#) raise serious questions about her suitability to lead ADEQ in a manner that respects the needs of Arizona's citizens, businesses, and economy.

In fact, the voters recognized Ms. Peters as being too radical for Arizona when she ran for CAWCD and was substantially rejected to serve by the voters, coming in 8th place out of 10 candidates.

1. Leadership in Phoenix's Climate Action Plan

Ms. Peters was a driving force behind Phoenix's 2021 Climate Action Plan, which set ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. These goals impose burdensome mandates that threaten

Arizona's economic vitality and individual freedoms. The plan's push to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips to 60% of all trips by 2050 lead to radical policies such as congestion pricing or low-emission zones, limiting Arizonans' freedom to move and increasing costs for families who rely on personal vehicles in a car-dependent region. Such measures prioritize partisan ideological goals over practical realities.

2. Advocacy for the C40 Cities Program

Under Ms. Peters' leadership, Phoenix joined the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group in 2020, aligning the city with a global network that advocates for unnecessary aggressive emissions reductions and urban transformation. The C40's framework, which Ms. Peters embraced, promotes radical partisan ideological policies that curtail personal liberties, such as reducing car ownership, reducing meat consumption and replacing it with insect protein, limiting new clothing to only two garments a year, and imposing strict urban planning regulations. These policies, often modeled on dense, transit-heavy cities unlike Phoenix, are ill-suited to Arizona's unique geography and lifestyle. By championing C40 membership, Ms. Peters demonstrated a willingness to prioritize international agendas over local needs, raising concerns about her commitment to Arizona's sovereignty and the practical concerns of its citizens.

In speaking on the C40 plan, Ms. Peters was exuberant about expanding the ideological radical plan in Phoenix. She is quoted by [Cronkite News in 2022](#) as saying, "That requires that we get to net zero carbon emissions as a community by 2050. So the Climate Action Plan kind of details where carbon emissions are today and what we would need to do to accomplish that goal."

3. Alignment with the Deadline 2020 Climate Cities Report

Ms. Peters' endorsement of the Deadline 2020 report, which calls for cities to halve per capita emissions by 2030 and reach net-zero by 2050, further underscores her radical approach. The report's mandates, which she integrated into Phoenix's Climate Action Plan, advocate for sweeping changes in transportation, energy, and waste management that could impose significant costs on businesses and taxpayers. For example, the push for 15% renewable energy by 2025 and carbon neutrality by 2060 requires substantial public and private investment, potentially increasing utility rates and taxes for Arizonans already grappling with inflation. These radical ideological policies stifle economic growth and burden small businesses, which are the backbone of Arizona's economy, without sufficient regard for cost-benefit analysis or public input.

4. Called for Reworking the Economy for Radical Climate Action

While campaigning as a candidate for CAWCD, Ms. Peters expressed the belief that we need to “[rework the economy](#)” to work “collectively” to solve climate change. When asked how she would accomplish this, [she stated](#), “*We need to look at how we travel. We need to look at how we procure food. We need to look at a lot of things.*”

Ms. Peters further expounded on these beliefs in her [Ballotpedia](#) campaign survey where she stated that “the root causes of the current crisis include unsustainable water use, unsustainable use of fossil fuels for transportation and generation of electricity, land use decisions that preclude local food production and adequate affordable housing, inequitable access to quality affordable education and health care, to name a few.”

5. Support for Demand Management

While serving on the Awmua Management Board, in 2022, the Board was presented with a plan for [demand management](#) in water conservation. Demand management is a tool for regulators to limit public consumption of water on an individual basis without consent. This radical tool is promoted by the World Economic Forum. Is demand management a tool Ms. Peters believes should be used to “rework the economy” to work “collectively” to solve climate change?

We can answer that question when we look at the Phoenix City Council agendas. In 2017, one of Ms. Peter’s RFPs included a requirement for water demand management capabilities (see [page 270 of link](#)).

Additionally, demand management is a tool for limiting personal freedom in transportation. The [C40 City plan](#), which Ms. Peters champions, states, “Travel Demand Management is the next most successful in reducing emissions across C40 cities, with emissions reductions of 17%. This programme involves a range of initiatives such as car sharing, congestion charging zones, parking restrictions and cycle hire programmes which together can reduce energy consumption for transport.”

6. Opposition to Coal Energy

In regard to closing the Navajo Coal-fired power plant, [Ms. Peters](#) said it was a “step in the right direction” and “that’s the kind of thing that needs to continue to happen.” Once confirmed, while businesses need an ever-growing abundance of energy sources, will Ms.

Peters work to keep her commitment to reducing clean energy sources in support of her radical ideological goals?

7. Commitment to Tree Equity

In 2021, Ms. Peters coordinated a program for [“tree equity”](#) with an MOU with American Forests which substantially increased the cost of an existing tree planting program in Phoenix, demonstrating her commitment at hurting the taxpayers to advance her radical ideological partisan agenda.

Concerns for ADEQ Leadership

As Director of ADEQ, Ms. Peters is positioned to influence environmental regulations that affect every Arizonan. Her track record suggests a preference for top-down, ideologically driven policies that prioritize global climate goals over the immediate needs of Arizona’s residents. Additionally, at the 2022 Arizona Forward Climate Summit, when asked about climate lockdowns, Gov. Hobbs’ office stated they wouldn’t “start with climate lockdowns.” Indeed, Gov. Hobbs has authority to issue climate lockdown emergencies and with Ms. Peters on her side, her radical policies certainly align with such rogue, aggressive strategies to accomplish their mutual ideological goals.

We are particularly troubled by the potential for Ms. Peters leadership to expand restrictive regulations that could:

- **Undermine Freedom of Movement:** Policies modeled on C40 and Deadline 2020 could lead to statewide restrictions on vehicle use, limiting Arizonans’ ability to travel freely and affordably.
- **Increase Economic Burdens:** The high costs of transitioning to renewable energy and implementing waste reduction programs could raise taxes and utility rates, disproportionately harming low-income families and small businesses.
- **Erode Local Autonomy:** Her alignment with international frameworks like C40 raises concerns about ADEQ pursuing policies that reflect globalist priorities rather than Arizona’s unique environmental and economic context.

A Call for Balanced Leadership

Arizona deserves an ADEQ Director who will protect public health and the environment while respecting individual liberties, fostering economic growth, and prioritizing local

solutions. Ms. Peters' history of advocating for radical climate policies, as evidenced by her leadership in Phoenix's Climate Action Plan, C40 Cities program, and Deadline 2020 alignment, suggests she may pursue an agenda that is out of step with these principles. We urge the Committee on Director Nominations to carefully consider these concerns and evaluate whether Ms. Peters can lead ADEQ in a manner that balances environmental stewardship with the needs of Arizona's citizens and economy.

We respectfully request that you reject Ms. Peters' nomination and seek a candidate who will uphold Arizona's values of freedom, prosperity, and pragmatic governance. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter and for your commitment to serving the people of Arizona.

Sincerely,

Merissa Hamilton
Chairwoman
EZA.org

Aimee Yentes
VP of Policy
Arizona Free Enterprise Club

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State Freedom Caucus Network (SFCN)

Deborah Cheatham
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