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To Members of the California State Assembly and California State Senate:

Audubon California supports Assembly Bills 398 and 617. With the Trump Administration completely abandoning any effort to address the climate change crisis, the State of California must lead on this vital issue to both birds and people.

Denying that climate change is happening and failing to act harms future generations of people and birds. Climate change has been identified as a existential threat to human health, economic stability, and national security. We urge our state leaders to continue to show that smart climate policy is good for people, wildlife, and the economy.

These two bills are the result of tough negotiations in the Legislature and compromise, but we understand that they represent the necessary next step in California's effort to rise to the challenge of climate change. Our hope is that in the coming years, our leaders will continue to build on these bills to address ongoing pollution and other conditions that disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities. We cannot wait for the federal government to lead on this issue.

These important bills should advance to the Governor's desk. According to Audubon research, 170 California bird species will be at risk of going extinct in the coming decades if we fail to act on climate. Birds are indicators of environmental health – and where birds are in decline other wildlife, biodiversity, and people suffer. Moreover, the carbon emissions that drive climate change not only create an unhealthy environment for birds and wildlife, but they also degrade our communities and pose a threat to public health.

California once again has an opportunity to lead the nation and show how a state can successfully address climate change without sacrificing a thriving economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Lynes".

Michael Lynes
Director of Public Policy
Audubon California