

Community Issues Programming for July 1 - September 30, 2023

WCLH has identified the following issues as significant issues facing our community his quarter. Following each issue is a list of programs aired addressing that issue.

Issue: Climate Crisis: Our community is concerned about climate change as well as the impact of certain environmental policies.

Democracy Now! British Columbia in State of Emergency as Climate Change Fuels Canada's Worst Wildfire Season Ever In Canada, the province of British Columbia has declared a state of emergency where entire towns have been burned to the ground in the country's worst wildfire season ever. Evacuation orders are in place for more than 35,000 people, and 30,000 more have been told to be prepared to evacuate. Nearly all 20,000 residents have already left the city of Yellowknife, the capital of Canada's Northwest Territories. Scientists say climate change is increasing the risk of wildfires because they are fueled by the increasingly hot and dry weather. "There's a symbiosis here between how the climate is changing relative to the length of a potential fire season and the fuels that provide energy to fires," says Bob Gray, a wildland fire ecologist, speaking to us from Chilliwack, British Columbia. Gray warns that Canada's firefighting workforce is stretched thin, relying on a network of provincial firefighters, contractors and international firefighters.

Airdate 21 August 2023 8:52 Length 8 minutes

Democracy Now! "GOP Candidates Refuse to Say Climate Change Is Caused by Humans; Vivek Ramaswamy Calls It a "Hoax". On the same day a heat wave forced Milwaukee, Wisconsin, public schools to close for the day, moderators at the first Republican presidential debate in the city asked candidates if they believed climate change was caused by human activity. Their answers ranged from avoidance to outright denial. "I think this sums up the Republican Party at this point," says John Nichols, national affairs correspondent at The Nation. "The moderate position in the Republican Party is avoidance, but I think a very ... popular position within the party is one of actual denial." Nichols added that the heat index was 114 degrees in Milwaukee on the day of the debate. "We saw peak climate denial in a Republican debate, and it's kind of amazing at this late stage in history."

Airdate: 24 AUGUST 2023 8:48AM LENGTH: 4:25 MINUTES

Democracy Now! “U.S. Aquifers Are Running Dry, Posing Major Threat to Drinking Water Supply”. A major New York Times investigation reveals how the United States’ aquifers are becoming severely depleted due to overuse in part from huge industrial farms and sprawling cities. The Times reports that Kansas corn yields are plummeting due to a lack of water, there is not enough water to support the construction of new homes in parts of Phoenix, Arizona, and rivers across the country are drying up as aquifers are being drained far faster than they are refilling. “It can take millions of years to fill an aquifer, but they can be depleted in 50 years,” says Warigia Bowman, director of sustainable energy and natural resources law at the University of Tulsa College of Law. “All coastal regions in the United States are really being threatened by groundwater and aquifer problems.”

Airdate: 31 AUGUST 2023 8:52AM LENGTH: 7 MINUTES

Democracy Now! “Labor, Frontline & Youth Voices Call on Biden to Immediately Act to Prevent Climate Catastrophe”. During the rally at Sunday’s March to End Fossil Fuels in New York City, activists decried President Joe Biden’s continued investment in fossil fuels and his refusal to declare a national emergency over the worsening effects of climate change. Louisiana climate justice activist Roishetta Ozane said Biden is “personally accountable” for climate change-fueled natural disasters, while 16-year-old Fridays for Future organizer Helen Mancini proclaimed, “There is not enough time to put this off another term.” Both emphasized the role of impacted communities — from those living in the shadow of toxic production plants to youth facing the prospect of an increasingly uninhabitable planet — in demanding climate action, a call echoed by Teamsters Local 808’s Chris Silvera, who declared that the fight for climate justice “is a workers’ fight.”

Airdate: 18 SEPTEMBER 2023 8:47AM LENGTH: 12 MINUTES

Issue: Immigration: This area is largely Hispanic and Latin, and these changes and other issues that are affecting our community.

Democracy Now! :” “Breaking Point”: Cities Struggle with Rise in Asylum Seekers; U.S. Foreign Policy Linked to Increase”. A sharp increase in the number of people attempting to cross into the United States is straining resources in border communities, as thousands of asylum seekers arrive at the southern U.S. border each day seeking safety from violence, conflict, extreme poverty and the impacts of the climate crisis. Congressman Jesús “Chuy” García of Illinois says decades of U.S. military interventions, sanctions and the war on drugs “are all important factors” in what is driving the migration, particularly from South and Central America. “We need a system that responds both compassionately and responds to the root causes of why people come to this country,” he says. We also speak with Fernando García, founder and executive director of the Border Network for Human Rights in El Paso, who says the lack of leadership from the federal government is causing hardship along the border for both asylum seekers and local communities struggling to welcome the newcomers. “Nothing has been done

— not by this administration, obviously, and much less from the previous administration. So we are seeing the same situations over and over,” he says.

Airdate: 27 SEPTEMBER 2023 8:13AM LENGTH: 27 MINUTE

Democracy Now! : ““Broken System”: NYC Says It Has No More Room for Asylum Seekers as Advocates Demand Long-Term Shelter.” New York City Mayor Eric Adams has announced a plan to house as many as 2,000 asylum seekers at a tent complex on Randalls Island in the East River. Tens of thousands of asylum seekers have been sent to New York since last year and must wait 150 days to file for a work permit, leaving them no options to make a stable living. As the Adams administration claims the city has surpassed its ability to shelter new arrivals, migrants have been stuck in the city’s shelter system for months or repeatedly been forced to sleep in the streets, including last week when dozens waited outside Manhattan’s Roosevelt Hotel for days, sleeping shoulder to shoulder on the sidewalk, in hopes for a bed and shelter. We speak with Murad Awawdeh, executive director of the New York Immigration Coalition and NYC Action, who calls for an investment in public resources and to support people as they move out of the shelter system into permanent housing. “We want to flip this on its head and actually support people to get out as quickly as possible.”

Airdate: 8 AUGUST 2023 8:38AM LENGTH: 10 MINUTES

Issue: Abortion : Abortion is a highly controversial issue in our community.

Democracy Now! : “Mexico Decriminalizes Abortion in Major Step Forward for Reproductive Rights in Latin America.” In a unanimous decision, Mexico’s Supreme Court issued a historic ruling Wednesday decriminalizing abortion on the federal level. While laws banning the procedure are still in place in a majority of Mexican states, people in those states can now receive abortions at federal medical facilities run the country’s public health system, and states will be barred from penalizing those patients and providers. The ruling is part of a wave of reproductive rights wins in the region, as Mexico now joins Argentina and Colombia in decriminalizing or legalizing abortion since 2020. “Latin America is actually leading the conversation on the protection of reproductive rights,” says our guest Cristina Rosero, who worked on the lawsuit that decriminalized abortion in Colombia last year. Meanwhile, Mexico is on track to elect its first woman president, as its two major political parties have both named women candidates for next year’s presidential election. In the face of continued political violence against women in the country, the representation of women in its highest office is “definitely a step forward for our political rights here in Mexico,” says Rebeca Ramos, executive director of the Mexico City-based reproductive rights nonprofit GIRE.”

Airdate: 8 SEPTEMBER 2023 8:31AM LENGTH: 17 MINUTES

Democracy Now! : “Freedom vs. Compelled Birth: Dorothy Roberts on Abortion Fights in Texas, Ohio & Across the U.S.” We look at the fight for reproductive rights in the United States

with Dorothy Roberts, director of the University of Pennsylvania Program on Race, Science and Society, who has long warned against the criminalization of pregnancy and has been hailed as a pioneer in the reproductive justice movement. A judge in Texas ruled Friday the state's abortion ban was too restrictive in cases of dangerous pregnancy complications, allowing doctors to perform abortions in such instances without risk of criminal prosecution, but the state's Attorney General's Office filed an immediate appeal and effectively blocked the order. This comes as Ohio voters head to the polls this week to vote on a ballot measure that could raise the threshold for changing the state's constitution to 60%, an effort fueled by right-wing activists to prevent a simple majority of voters from enshrining abortion rights later this year. "We're in a battle in this nation on this question of being free or being compelled to give birth," says Roberts.

Airdate: 7 AUGUST 2023 8:17AM LENGTH: 10 MINUTES

Issue: Gun Control: Recent mass shootings have some calling for stricter gun control.

***Democracy Now!* : "Racist Shootings "Don't Happen in a Vacuum": Bishop Barber on DeSantis, Trump & Those Who Spread Hate"** As federal law enforcement opens an investigation into the Jacksonville, Florida, shooting where a white gunman killed three Black people at a Dollar General as a possible hate crime and act of domestic violent extremism, we speak with civil rights leader Bishop William Barber about the increasing number of racist attacks in America fueled by racism. "There is this history of not just who kills, but what kills and what creates the atmosphere," says Barber, who calls for a political movement of love to force out hateful politicians. Barber specifically condemns the Republican Party and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis for attacking cultural issues as a distraction for policy failures. "The racist rhetoric and the culture wars and the hatred toward women, the hatred toward immigrants, the hatred toward the trans community is a form of deflection," says Barber. "He's decided that this is his way to office: distraction, division, deflection, focusing on culture wars so that he cannot be labeled as a failed governor."

Airdate: 5 September 2023 8:14AM LENGTH: 29 MINUTES