

Community Issues Programming for September 30 - December 31, 2023

WCLH has identified the following issues as significant issues facing our community this 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!*” Phase Down, Not Phase Out: COP28 Deal on Fossil Fuels Disappoints Activists & Vulnerable States”**

As the United Nations climate summit ends with nations pledging to transition away from fossil fuels instead of explicitly calling for a fossil fuel phaseout, we go to the COP28 site in Dubai for a debrief with Asad Rehman, spokesperson for the Climate Justice Coalition. He says the deal overseen by COP28 president and head of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company Sultan Al Jaber is a “very weak text” with “lots of loopholes” that allows rich countries to avoid responsibility. “If you’re an oil and gas baron and CEO, you must be rubbing your hands with glee,” says Rehman. “This requires everybody to take action, but developing countries can only act if they’re given the support.”

Airdate 13 December 2023 8:13 Length 19 minutes

***Democracy Now!* “Climate Activists Outraged as COP28 Draft Text Drops Call for Fossil Fuel Phaseout”**

At the COP28 U.N. climate summit, a draft agreement released Monday omits a call to phase out fossil fuels, proposing “reductions” instead. The United States, Canada and other rich countries have loudly championed a phaseout but are simultaneously approving new oil and gas projects eating up the planet’s remaining carbon budget, says Meena Raman, head of programs at Third World Network and president of Friends of the Earth Malaysia. “Developed countries must take the lead, and they must end fossil fuel production and consumption now, not in 2030, 2040 or 2050,” Raman says. We also speak with South African climate and energy expert Tasneem Essop, who says any phaseout of fossil fuels must be “just and equitable,” giving poorer countries room to develop and putting the onus on the rich Global North to decarbonize first.

Airdate: 12 DECEMBER 2023 8:27M LENGTH: 9 MINUTES

***Democracy Now!* “Why Are Russia & U.S. Promoting Nuclear Power at U.N. Climate Talks? Russian Environmentalist Speaks Out”**

As Vladimir Putin arrives in Abu Dhabi but does not plan to attend the COP28 summit in Dubai, we speak with Vladimir Slivyak, co-chair for the leading Russian environmental organization Ecodefense, about the climate impact of Russia's war on Ukraine and the renewed push at the summit to expand nuclear power. "When you promote nuclear power, you have to understand it's diverting resources from renewable energy, and renewable energy is the real, most efficient answer to climate change," says Slivyak. He also discusses how the collapse of civil society in Russia has pushed him and other social activists to leave the country.

Airdate: 6 DECEMBER 2023 8:48AM LENGTH: 10 MINUTES

***Democracy Now!* "Big Oil's Takeover of U.N. Climate Summit Decried by Activists Fighting for Fossil Fuel Phaseout"** .

Climate activist Harjeet Singh joins us for an update on the U.N. climate summit in Dubai, where fossil fuel lobbyists outnumber many countries' delegations. "It is deeply, deeply problematic to see how fossil fuel lobbyists are taking over these climate talks," he says, noting that climate activists' fears of an industry takeover of the world's foremost gathering for climate governance appear to have come true. "We can't just allow fossil fuel industry to define what is going to happen here," Singh warns, as financial interests continue to divert political energy away from decarbonization. Singh is the head of global political strategy with Climate Action Network and works on the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, a global initiative to phase out fossil fuels and support a just transition.

Airdate: 6 DECEMBER 2023 8:31AM LENGTH: 10 MINUTES

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

***Democracy Now!* : "As Biden Pushes Trump-Like Border Policies, Blinken Meets with AMLO, Who Has Criticized U.S. Sanctions"**.

As many as 10,000 people a day are being arrested in the U.S.-Mexico border as the Biden administration adapts the GOP's xenophobic anti-immigrant framework ahead of the 2024 election, says Laura Carlsen, director of the Mexico City-based think tank MIRA: Feminisms and Democracies. She joins us as the U.S. secretary of state and homeland security secretary met Wednesday with the Mexican president. The U.S. and its policies south of the border, including sanctions and an exported drug war, are "actually causing the migration that they then try to contain — through these measures that are whipping up racism and also feeding into Republican campaigns," says Carlsen.

Airdate: 28 DECEMBER 2023 8:50AM LENGTH: 9 MINUTES

***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: 37 MINUTES

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

***Democracy Now!* : “Texas Woman Denied Abortion for Nonviable Fetus, Flees State, “One of Thousands” in Similar Position.”**

A Texas woman has had to flee to another state to have an emergency abortion after the state Supreme Court ruled against her. Kate Cox fled Monday after she had petitioned a judge to get an exemption from the state’s near-total abortion ban when her fetus was diagnosed with a fatal condition and doctors warned her carrying to term could endanger her fertility. “Unfortunately, it’s one of hundreds, if not thousands, of comparable stories,” says Dr. Bhavik Kumar, an abortion provider in Texas. “While these politicians say there are exceptions, somebody really has to be at death’s door before we can reasonably act in their favor.” We also speak with Tamarra Wieder, Kentucky state director for Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates, who says the Texas case could have a “chilling effect” on people seeking abortions elsewhere in the country, including in Kentucky, where a pregnant woman is the lead plaintiff in a new class-action lawsuit that argues the state’s ban on abortion violates its constitution. “These laws, restrictions and attacks don’t happen in a vacuum,” says Wieder.

Airdate: 12 DECEMBER 2023 8:46AM LENGTH: 13 MINUTES

***Democracy Now!* : “The Choice Is Choice: Abortion Rights Supporters Win Big in Ohio, Kentucky and Virginia.”**

We look at the results of Tuesday's U.S. elections with *The Nation's* Amy Littlefield and John Nichols, who say the results leave no doubt that protecting and expanding abortion rights is motivating voters across the country. Ohio approved a state constitutional amendment to protect reproductive access, overcoming numerous procedural hurdles from opponents, and Democrats won key races for the governor's mansion in Kentucky and the Virginia statehouse based on enduring voter anger over abortion restrictions. "This is one of the best nights for Democrats in an off-year election that we've seen in a very, very long time," says Nichols, who adds that the results suggest the electorate is more progressive than pundits often claim. Littlefield notes that after decades of abortion being treated as a third rail in U.S. politics, Democrats now "need the abortion rights movement more than the movement needs them."

Airdate: 8 NOVEMBER 2023 8:16AM LENGTH: 9 MINUTES

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

***Democracy Now!* : "Gunman Wearing MAGA Hat Shoots Indigenous Activist at New Mexico Protest over Conquistador Statue"**

In New Mexico, a 23-year-old gunman wearing a red MAGA hat opened fire last week on Jacob Johns and other Indigenous activists opposing plans to reinstall a statue honoring the 16th century conquistador Juan de Oñate, New Mexico's first colonial governor. Johns, the prominent climate activist, was airlifted from Española to an Albuquerque hospital and required emergency surgery. We speak with Malaya Peixinho, who participated in Thursday's gathering, about how the statue of the colonial leader has divided the local community. "It is a really controversial thing to talk about Oñate," says Peixinho, who believes funds for the statue could go to social programs instead. "That feels more important than funding a statue being resurrected." The shooter, Ryan Martinez, was arrested and charged with attempted murder and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon for shooting Johns and aiming the gun at Peixinho, who calls the charges "fair" and blames police for not intervening. "They didn't show up for us," says Peixinho.

Airdate: 3 October 2023 8:34AM LENGTH: 11 MINUTES