



April 26, 2021

Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins
State Capitol - Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
State Capitol - Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol - Room 5094
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol - Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT for the Governor's Budget Proposal authorizing \$325M in Cap-and-Trade expenditures to improve air quality in disadvantaged communities

Dear Legislative and Budget Committee leaders:

The California Environmental Justice League urges your support for the Governor's 2021-22 proposed budget expenditure of \$325 million for the Community Air Protection Program. These funds provide grants to community-based organizations, funding for local air districts, and incentives for cleaner vehicles and equipment to improve air quality in disadvantaged communities.

California has set ambitious goals for carbon emissions and renewable energy, but lower-income and ethnic communities are often overlooked. According to recent studies, African Americans and Latinos are exposed to 40 percent more particulate matter pollution than white Californians, and households earning less than \$20,000 a year or those without vehicles suffer from 20 percent more particulate matter inhalation than the state average. Exposure to particulate matter is linked to heart and lung disease, asthma, and premature death.

Even in less polluted regions, poorer neighborhoods were exposed to more air contaminants than their higher-income counterparts due to the proximity of factories, warehouse delivery trucks, shipyards, and agriculture. Lower-income communities of color have long borne the disproportionate impacts of pollution. This must change.

Community Air Protection Program funds will:

- Allow local air districts and community-based organizations to evaluate local air quality and implement best known strategies for emission reductions. This collaboration provides better integration of community, regional and state programs to facilitate a

whole-state approach to air quality planning and implementation.

- Provide resources for mitigating environmental hazards and lowering health risks, especially among disadvantaged minority communities that already suffer from disproportionate access to health care.
- Ensure that our most vulnerable communities are not left behind by taking into consideration the special needs of different demographics. This will help direct resources to jurisdictions that are most impacted to improve the overall program effectiveness.

For these and other reasons, we SUPPORT the governor's proposed funding for the Community Air Protection Program.

cc: Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 2 – Resources & Environmental Protection
Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 3 – Climate, Resources & Energy