

Health Network for Clean Air

A network of health organizations working to improve air quality in California



AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION®
of California

10-8-2

Dr. Janet Abshire

September 22, 2010

Mary Nichols, Chair and Members
California Air Resources Board
1000 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Adopt the most Ambitious and Achievable Targets to improve Public Health

Dear Chairman Nichols and members of the California Air Resources Board:

On behalf of the undersigned members of California's public health community, we are writing to thank you and your staff for your hard work and dedication toward the implementation of Senate Bill 375 (SB 375: Steinberg 2008). Our members and organizations view the strong implementation of SB 375 as a top public health priority and we are very pleased that this historic process is underway. We applaud the work of the Regional Targets Advisory Committee that lead to the target development and we support the targets recommended in the August 9, 2010 staff report.

As highlighted in our June 23, 2010 letter to your board, research continues to prove the important connection between land use and public health. We cannot continue the business as usual planning that forces more and more driving and contributes to our state leading the nation in poor air quality. Such auto-dependent planning also results in many negative health outcomes, including increased risk for chronic disease, traffic injuries and deaths. Research shows that people living in highly walkable, mixed-use communities are more than twice as likely to get the recommended 30 minutes of daily exercise as those living in auto-oriented areas and reduce traffic emissions¹.

In order to successfully fulfill the promise of a healthier California through the strong implementation of SB 375, the undersigned public health organizations urge that:

- **CARB should adopt the most ambitious targets possible for 2020 and 2035.**

We encourage you to adopt the proposals included in the August staff report as these reflect the four large MPOs' most reliable assessment of what is both ambitious and achievable. We also encourage you to support the smaller MPOs in developing the tools and strategies needed to go beyond existing Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) and ensure that all regions pursue and achieve greenhouse gas reductions.

¹ L. Frank et al., Linking Objectively Measured Physical Activity with Objectively Measured Urban Form: Findings from SMARTAQ, Vol. 28, Issue 2, American Journal of Preventative Medicine, at 117-125 (February 2005).

- March 10, 2010
- **CARB should communicate the many benefits of strong implementation of SB 375 to the public and local leaders.** As noted in the Regional Targets Advisory Committee report, the advancement of many benefits that will accompany SB 375, from improved health and air quality to preservation of open spaces, should be a key goal of ARB's target-setting process. Because improved planning will add significantly to the quality of life in California, it is critical that these benefits be quantified and highlighted as the SCS plans are developed.
 - **CARB should support work to improve planning models on a continuous basis and to develop the capacity to model the health effects of various development scenarios.** The improvement in models will not only allow planning agencies to better estimate the climate benefits of preferred developments, but the estimated health outcomes, as well. We urge CARB to support models that demonstrate public health outcomes such as increased daily physical activity rates associated with biking and pedestrian infrastructure and improvements in asthma, obesity, diabetes and other health outcomes.
 - **CARB must partner with local and regional governments to identify and secure federal, state and private funding for improved planning and sustainable development.** To ensure the greatest success of SB 375, we urge you to continue to work with local governments to identify public and private resources needed to support local implementation of sustainable development.

Every community can contribute to the effort to provide cleaner air and greater possibilities for healthy lifestyles to its residents. Adopting ambitious targets under SB 375 will encourage just that.

We thank you again for your leadership and look forward to working with your staff and the regions as SB 375 moves from the target-setting stage to the development of Sustainable Communities Strategies.

Sincerely,

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