

## Blueprint for South Sacramento AB 617 Justice

In CARB's most recent AB 617 guidance document, The People's Blueprint, "CARB suggests that communities selected for both a Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) and Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) develop them in tandem to strengthen both when monitoring data is necessary to address the community's concerns." Furthermore, the passage provides guidance on how to synergize these dual efforts to maximize potential benefits.<sup>1</sup> Given the specific guidance provided here, the passage clearly indicates that not all communities are selected for simultaneous CAMP and CERP community distinction.

The community has monitoring data concerns as highlighted by the public comment letter submitted by Mauro Libre for the October 2023 Board Hearing<sup>2</sup>. The testimony that many members of the community delivered that day created a tension that led to productive discussions with the Sacramento Metropolitan Air District (Sac Metro). People who had previously been uninvolved joined the AB 617 process and immediately began confronting issues and raising concerns. CARB staff were turning a blind eye as usual, while community raised concerns about self-dealing on the part of the Community Steering Committee (CSC). The community's advocacy led to many satisfactory resolutions; and to her credit, Janice Lam from SacMetro made improvements. However, it remains clear that Frederick Douglas's comment on advocacy remains true today, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

Given the intentional exclusion of South Sacramento's most marginalized communities in closest proximity to pollution, it is a matter of correcting an injustice to characterize the air quality in those neighborhoods for the community. The community cannot rest assured that the pollution emissions being reduced as part of any South Sacramento AB 617 CERP are also the same pollutants causing them the most harm. This is because they were not monitored as part of the AB 617 South Sacramento CAMP; their air has not been characterized.

As of Juneteenth, 2024, CARB's website was calling the South Sacramento AB 617 CAMP a success, despite this process not yielding a report to inform the community of their air quality's

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<sup>1</sup> CARB AB 617 Blueprint 2.0: [https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-04/BP2.0\\_FULL\\_FINAL\\_ENG\\_2024\\_04\\_09.pdf](https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-04/BP2.0_FULL_FINAL_ENG_2024_04_09.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Public Comment submitted by Mauro Libre during the October 2023 Board Hearing: [https://www.arb.ca.gov/lispub/comm/iframe\\_bccomdisp.php?listname=ab617blueprint2.0&comment\\_num=7&virt\\_num=3](https://www.arb.ca.gov/lispub/comm/iframe_bccomdisp.php?listname=ab617blueprint2.0&comment_num=7&virt_num=3)

make up. When asked where the greatest emissions were found during a recent AB 617 CSC meeting, the CSC responded that they were at the northernmost boundary of the CAMP boundaries, and SacMetro did not disagree. This is where the most marginalized communities in closest proximity to pollution begin; the same communities that were intentionally excluded from the AB 617 process. The response from the CSC clamors for justice for these low-income, communities of color (The Avenues, Woodbine, and others).

I expect you will vote to transition South Sacramento's AB 617 CAMP to a CERP because you have already taken to calling it a success. However, the community has air monitoring data concerns like those mentioned in Blueprint 2.0. Due to these concerns, we ask that South Sacramento be formally designated as both a CAMP and CERP community. The excluded communities deserve to have their air quality monitored under a wholly CAMP process. This affords you (CARB, SacMetro, South Sac AB 617 CSC) an opportunity to correct an injustice that you created and/or permitted through your complicit silence. You all have the power to say yes, and to not exercise it is to double the amount of injustice already inflicted on these communities.

For several months now, I have been advocating for this dual designation. I have been told that the CERP will also function as a CAMP; that a CERP subcommittee can be formed to address monitoring concerns; that monitoring equipment can now be deployed to those excluded communities as part of the CERP; that the CERP boundaries will become CAMP boundaries. The possibility of a formal request to the CARB Board for a simultaneous CAMP and CERP designation, with separate steering committees, has not been offered. In fact, my sense is that I am being dissuaded from pursuing that option. Again, this option is in CARB AB 617 2.0 Blueprint, which was intended to address the racism that AB 617 has been previously accused of inflicting on communities; I believe it was based on the Richmond model.

I recently heard from a Richmond advocate who was familiar with the AB 617 process there. They informed me that the Richmond steering committee vote for a dual designation of a CERP and CAMP, with separately run processes, was borne out of similar concerns as ours; they believed that certain marginalized communities were intentionally excluded from AB 617 due to their proximity to Chevron, and Chevron's seeming grip on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Your People's Blueprint document was intended to provide solutions to these AB 617 growing pains that were experienced by Richmond. South Sacramento AB 617 is in the same place today, although many on their CSC may not realize it. Many of them are ill informed about the community, and some are (seemingly) outright shills in the service of local elected officials who also serve as Board members of public health agencies including SacMetro, and CARB.

I ask that you formally designate South Sacramento AB 617 as both a CAMP and CERP community operating with separate steering committee processes that inform each other, as recommended in the Blueprint. I also ask that a new CAMP CSC be formed with a majority of its members coming from the communities that were previously excluded during the existing CAMP process. Given the charade of equity up to now with the existing process, I would also suggest that people not be allowed to serve on both steering committees; they would have to pick one or the other. The increased community participation in this process since CARB's October Board hearing assures me that recruiting new CSC members will not be a problem. A South Sacramento CAMP can still achieve the spirit of AB 617.

Separately, I have two follow up concerns that arose out of advocating on this issue. First, CARB Board Member Balmes almost seemed violent in his disregard for community concerns about equity of speaking time during the October 2023 Board hearing. What seemed like a half hour of him praising CARB for the "People's Blueprint" came off as telling the community he will do as he pleases with our valuable time. This felt especially hurtful given there were very few public comments, and we were still limited to two minutes. We do have the power to resist and call him out on it; and we have new costumes for it. Second, Eric Guerra is not the only one accountable to South Sacramento; the entirety of the CARB Board is accountable to my community. We are here in part because you abdicated your responsibility to South Sacramento, by deferring to Phil Serna, who happened to have an industrial pet project across the street from the excluded communities and AB 617 CAMP boundaries, while sitting on the SacMetro and CARB Boards. We will not accept these behaviors anymore.

I saw the sham in your equity and justice rhetoric when it came to AB 617. The way your Board members, Executive Office, and OCAP staff (past and present) said one thing (we are for the community) and did the opposite (self-serving) is why you now fear losing power after the November election. That kind of treatment of community by government agencies has led people across the country to run from your rhetoric of justice and equity to a worse future. Right now, despite your rhetoric of justice, you are still the Drake to our Kendrick "... say you good, but he lied...No, you not a colleague, you a f\*\*\*\*ng colonizer. The family matter, and the truth of the matter, it was God's plan to show y'all the liar...they (you) not like us."

Do the right thing, please; if not for yourself today, do it for your legacy and a better tomorrow. I'd rather be friendly than harsh, but it's been unfruitful to be kind and polite to people who disregard my community's health and well-being while pretending to care about it, for a buck. As Frederick Douglas said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it

never will.” And as Dr. King encouraged, I’m seeking peace with you based on the presence of justice, and not a peace based on the absence of tension.

Sincerely,

Mauro Libre

Sick Side Sacramento Resident