



ANTHONY RENDON

SPEAKER of the ASSEMBLY

Sixty-Second Assembly District

January 27, 2023

Chair Liane Randolph
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Randolph and members of the Air Resources Board:

Today, the Air Resources Board (ARB) will hear proposed amendments to the Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Chromium Electroplating and Chromic Acid Anodizing Operations. I encourage the ARB to adopt the amendments, as proposed by staff, that would prohibit the construction of new hexavalent chromium facilities and would fully phase out the existing use of hexavalent chromium for both decorative and functional plating. If adopted, these amendments would help address decades of cumulative environmental burdens from toxic air contaminants that are often concentrated in disadvantaged communities, such as the ones I represent.

Many of the communities in South East Los Angeles are intermixed with heavy industrial facilities, putting schools and residences in close proximity to toxic emissions. The concentration of these facilities causes cumulative health impacts that are more significant than may be represented by regional air pollution indicators. This is particularly the case with hexavalent chromium, a pollutant that is approximately 500 times more toxic than diesel exhaust particulate matter. As reported in the Air Resources Board staff report, more than 70% of the 113 chrome plating facilities in California are in environmentally overburdened and disadvantaged communities. In my district, we have numerous plating facilities concentrated within the relatively small, five square mile area of Paramount.

In 2016, emission spikes of hexavalent chromium were detected from two Paramount facilities. The resulting monitoring from this incident clearly revealed that our communities were being burdened by higher levels of hexavalent chromium than the South Coast Air District or the Air Resources Board realized. These emission violations, along with the passage of AB 617 (C. Garcia, Statutes of 2017), reinvigorated attention to toxic emissions issues and brought our communities the regulatory attention needed to protect public health.

Chair Liane Randolph
January 27, 2023
Page 2

Today you have the opportunity to require the transformation of the industry to a less toxic alternative for chromium plating. In recognition that such a transformation can impose financial challenges to small businesses, last year the Legislature committed \$10 million to the ARB to assist with the transition away from the use of hexavalent chromium, which will be made available upon adoption of a rule to fully eliminate hexavalent chromium at all decorative and functional chromium plating facilities and chromic acid anodizing facilities statewide. These funds can be used to provide incentives for small businesses to transition away from hexavalent chromium, grow customer awareness and acceptance of trivalent chromium plating products, and fund demonstration projects that further alternative technologies. This funding aims to ensure that we are helping businesses while we are protecting public health.

I would like to commend the ARB for working with environmental justice groups in development of this rule. In May 2022, ARB members and staff visited communities in Paramount and Boyle Heights where there are schools and homes immediately adjacent to numerous industrial facilities, including chrome platers. I believe connecting with these communities and seeing first-hand the people impacted by pollution gives the board invaluable perspective as you approach the work before you.

I encourage the ARB to adopt these strong proposed regulations and thank you for your commitment and attention to the most impacted communities in the state.

Sincerely,



ANTOHN Y RENDON
Speaker of the Assembly