



February 10, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Richard Corey, Executive Officer
Veronica Eady, Assistant Executive Officer for Environmental Justice
Karen Magliano, Director of the Office of Community Air Protection
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Ensuring an Improved and Effective South Central Fresno Community Emissions Reduction Plan

To the California Air Resources Board:

The undersigned South Central Fresno residents and Community Steering Committee (“Committee”) members respectfully provide these comments and request a response to the following concerns regarding implementation of the Assembly Bill (“AB”) 617 program and, accordingly, request that the California Air Resources Board (“CARB”) require the following improvements to the South Central Fresno Community Emission Reduction Plan (CERP) in its staff report, or reject approval of the CERP until it is improved to comply with AB 617 and incorporates the following Committee identified strategies and actions.

It is of utmost importance now, as we approach the second year of AB 617 implementation, that CARB, local air districts, and community steering committees are aligned on the next steps of their Community Emissions Reduction Plans to truly achieve desired emission reductions. We offer the following comments based on our work in partnership with South Central Fresno neighborhoods, Committee members, and community based organizations:

1. CARB should not approve the Fresno CERP as it stands. Rather, the CERP should continue to be guided and developed by the Community Steering Committee for at least 30 days, until the CERP complies with the spirit and letter of AB 617 and responds to community priorities. When the CERP is updated according to the mandates of AB 617 and Community Steering Committee’s standards, the District should resubmit for CARB for review and consideration of approval. The priorities that the Community Steering Committee has shown great effort to include for the past several months include:



- a. Quantifiable emission reduction targets, as well as health protective targets, must be adopted for all regulatory and enforcement strategies, not just incentive strategies.¹ This should include emissions reduction targets for sources including: heavy duty mobile sources, older/high polluting cars, residential and open agricultural burning, and industrial sources. CARB's recommendation to continue to update targets as information becomes available for regulatory and other strategies falls short of what AB 617 and the Community Air Protection Program Blueprint (Blueprint) requires.
- b. Specific priority measures have been suggested by the Committee on multiple occasions and been excluded from the CERP, with the explanation that the Air District does not have jurisdiction to address them. Excluding these measures is unjustifiable, and a plan of action to implement these measures and address any conflicts of jurisdiction must be required in the CERP.
 - i. Prioritize and direct resources to complete a light, medium and heavy duty truck reroute study to reduce impacts to already disproportionately burdened neighborhoods by the end of 2020.
 - ii. Strengthen regulation of pesticides in their gaseous phase with strategies including tarping, notification to communities, and overall pesticide reduction.
 - iii. Review the Air District's rules for reducing air pollution in South Central Fresno² with the Community Steering Committee, strengthen and expand existing rules, and adopt new rules as identified by the Committee to reduce emissions by end of 2020. CARB's recommendation in its staff report to discuss permitting and rule making processes as well as next steps in the implementation of the industrial source strategies does not yet include this necessary and comprehensive level of review to ensure emission reductions and accountability to the Committee and community at large.
 - iv. Commit to drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Air District with the City of Fresno, County of Fresno, Caltrans, Fresno Council of Governments, and other relevant land use agencies that clarifies and details each agency's responsibilities in addressing each land use and air quality concern (ex: truck re-routing, pesticides, etc.), as well as gaps between agencies' responsibilities and jurisdictions. The MOU must detail

¹ Table 4-3: Estimated Emission Reductions for District Measures. [Community Emissions Reduction Program: South Central Fresno](#). Pg. 153.

² Table 3-2: District Rules Reducing South Central Fresno Air Pollution. [Community Emissions Reduction Program: South Central Fresno](#). Pg. 39.



specific coordinated, time-bound actions that agencies will take to address these gaps.

2. In its staff report for the South Central Fresno CERP, CARB must clearly state how it will use its authority in the AB 617 program to ensure its recommendations are implemented. In order for this to be clear, CARB needs to specify in its staff report for the CERP:
 - a. Actions CARB will take to comply with its own obligation in AB 617 to reduce mobile source emissions.
 - b. Actions CARB will take if data demonstrates an increase in emissions, which are inconsistent with the above mentioned emission reduction targets.
 - c. A timeline and deadline by which recommendations for the Fresno CERP will be reflected in the document.
 - d. Actions CARB will take if recommendations are not reflected in the CERP by the deadline, and if changes made do not reflect Community Steering Committee priorities.
3. We appreciate CARB's proposed process recommendations and reiterate our support for the following measures, to ensure greater cohesion between the Air District and the Community Steering Committee:
 - a. CARB should affirm the role of the Community Steering Committee and the importance of the Air District abiding by the Committee's established charter.
 - b. CARB should mandate regular reporting from the Community Steering Committee and Air District on the CERP's progress, and provide necessary directives to ensure the CERP is responsive to community-identified priorities.
 - c. The Air District and Committee members should set the agenda of each Community Steering Committee meeting to ensure the leadership of the Committee.
 - d. Community Steering Committee members should be provided resources that encourage greater participation and cohesion, such as translated materials, sufficient time to review materials, and a Committee email listserv.

We look forward to working with you, South Central Fresno residents, and the Community Steering Committee to ensure a diligent and robust public process in the second year of AB 617 implementation.

Sincerely,

Isabel Vargas
Community Steering Committee Member



Lilia Becerril
Community Steering Committee Member

Larry Taylor
Community Steering Committee Member

Lisa Flores
Community Steering Committee Member

Estela Ortega
Community Steering Committee Member

Sylvesta Hall
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cc: Samir Sheikh, Executive Director/APCO
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District