



CCA EJ

Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice
Centro de Acción Comunitaria y Justicia Ambiental

March 14, 2016

Mary Nichols
Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Chairwoman Nichols:

The Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCA EJ) is a nonprofit environmental health and justice organization in the Riverside/San Bernardino region of southern California. For more than 38 years CCA EJ has worked for clean air, healthy communities and environmental justice for our low income communities of color throughout our region. We write in strong support of the relocation of the CARB El Monte facility to the University of California, Riverside (UCR).

The Riverside location provides the unique opportunity to bring together CARB's scientific and technical capacities with the academic, scientific, research, health and policy resources of the UCR facility. UCR's engineering school is one of the top ten in the nation; the Center for Environmental and Engineering Research and Technology (CECERT) has contributed important research and technology development in the air quality and clean energy fields; the UCR Medical School provides a critical link to research health effects and the relationship of air pollution to diseases such as pulmonary heart disease and asthma. In addition UCR has outstanding life and physical science departments and a new school of public policy all of which fit with the mission, needs and challenges facing state clean air and climate programs in the coming years. Riverside has a long history of advocating for air pollution reduction through the work of such scientists as James Pitts, Arthur Winer, Alan Lloyd, Bill Carter and others, and the strong leadership of statesmen like Senator Robert Presley, Norton Younglove, Ron Loveridge, Congressman Jerry Lewis, Assembly member Walt Ingalls. Riverside's role in advancing progress to address air quality is historic and demonstrates the prime position and commitment this region has to solving this critical public health issue.

We are quite concerned in reviewing the "Staff Report: Analysis of Sites for the Southern California Consolidation Project" that recommends the relocation to the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly) in Los Angeles, instead of the University of California, Riverside (UCR) in the Inland Valleys. The primary reason seems to be "proximity". While we recognize the importance of the staffs' opinion, it shouldn't be the overriding consideration.

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This decision goes beyond the technical aspects of the facilities or the convenience for staff – it is about fairness in investments to the inland regions of the state. We have long been viewed as a mere extension of Los Angeles – a place to dump unwanted facilities the urban areas don't want without providing opportunities for benefits. The Inland Valleys are home to nearly 4.5 million people; 5 major universities; affordable quality housing and much more. This decision provides an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of significant infrastructure and technology investments in the Inland Empire and our disadvantaged communities.

The Inland Empire has long suffered the highest levels of pollution - from ozone levels in San Bernardino; to particulate pollution levels in Mira Loma, which have kept the entire air basin from meeting the federal clean air standards; to the BNSF railyard with the highest cancer risk of all railyards in the state- at a whopping 3300-in-a-million. We also face the proposal to site a logistics facility the size of more than 700 football fields that will be the greatest single source of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) in the state and will attract an additional 15,000 trucks per day. Yet, there is no presence of CARB in the region!

We believe that if CARB staff worked and lived in this region they would have a greater appreciation for the challenges we face and the urgency in which it must be addressed.

CCA EJ and its members in the many disadvantaged communities throughout Riverside and San Bernardino, strongly urge the Board members to vote to relocate the El Monte facility to UCR. You have an opportunity to build a world-class consolidated facility that combines the exceptional technology and scientific reputation of CARB with the academic, research, medical and policy opportunities of UCR in the region most heavily impacted by air pollution. This unique opportunity to have a facility to solve this critical issues while bringing important investment to a disadvantaged region is one we should not ignore.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Penny Newman".

Penny J. Newman
Executive Director