



September 15, 2017

Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Comments on 2017-2018 Draft Funding Guidelines August 4th Update

Dear ARB Staff:

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the recent draft of the Funding Guidelines update. As organizations working alongside the most impacted communities in the San Joaquin Valley and Eastern Coachella Valley, our collective goal is to ensure that residents most impacted by climate change see real, tangible benefits from climate investment programs. Because low-income communities of color are most often on the frontlines of climate change, state programs must be driven and led by these communities. We offer the following recommendations to help strengthen the Funding Guidelines so that overburdened communities can access much-needed funding for projects that meaningfully address these burdens.

I. NEGATIVE LOCALIZED IMPACTS AND SUBSTANTIAL BURDENS

The Funding Guidelines update does not include requirements for administering agencies to provide an analysis of a project's potential adverse impacts. We recommend that the administering agency conducts an analysis to determine potential negative impacts associated with a particular type of project, and the applicant should commit to practices that will completely mitigate and/or avoid these impacts.

Additionally, the applicant must also conduct their own analysis to determine whether the specific project will result in any of these listed impacts and be required to demonstrate that their proposed practices will, in fact, prevent any additional harm.

If the applicant cannot show that any practices will completely mitigate and/or avoid additional harm to nearby communities, or if they cannot commit to employing practices that do, the project should not be funded.

V. Guiding Principles for Program Design

Section V. Guiding Principles for Program Design emphasizes the greenhouse gas reductions that must result from climate investments, but does not mention that this must be done without further harming already overburdened communities. We suggest the following edits be made to V.A.1:

- *Each California Climate Investments project must provide real and quantifiable GHG emission reductions and should focus on the following broad project types:*
 - *Projects that achieve near-term GHG emissions reductions or net long-term GHG benefits, and achieve or maximize co-benefits (e.g. job creation) while not resulting in a net increase of criteria air pollutants and/or toxic air contaminants.*
 - *Projects that support development of the transformative technologies/approaches that reduce GHG emissions and are needed to achieve the State's long-term GHG emissions reduction goals and maximize co-benefits.*
- *When designing California Climate Investments programs, including which project types to fund, administering agencies should focus funding on the types of projects that achieve the greatest GHG emission reductions and are needed to meet climate goals and do not contribute to a net increase in criteria air pollutants and/or toxic air contaminants that further degrade air quality and directly and/or indirectly impact human health. Administering agencies should direct funding to the types of projects that not only result in GHG emission reductions, but do not contribute to air and water pollution. Negative impacts and pollution increases should be analyzed holistically (i.e. impacts to air or water quality, population displacement, etc.). This decision should be made early in the process when an administering agency is identifying funding priorities and preparing a draft Expenditure Record. For example, if an administering agency has a choice between a technology that achieves minimal GHG emission reductions and an alternative technology that yields significant GHG emission reductions and supports long-term climate goals, the agency should focus funding on the alternative technology. Similarly, if an administering agency is considering a technology that achieves significant GHG emission reductions but results in a significant net increase of toxic air contaminants, they must actively seek alternative technology that does not result in such adverse impacts.*

Additionally, rural disadvantaged communities are often unable to compete for climate investment funds due to lack of resources and staff capacity. We suggest that ARB include a provision under V.A.2 to target investments into rural communities and increase these communities' access to funding given historical neglect by perhaps establishing a set-aside specifically for disadvantaged rural communities. ARB as well as administering agencies must proactively work to support rural communities in competing

at the same level for grant funding as larger, urban communities, by insuring local government capacity does not create a barrier to development and submission of quality applications.

Furthermore, for programs that may include planning (i.e. Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities, Transit, Active Transportation, Transformative Climate Communities, etc.), administering agencies should allocate funds to increase communities' capacity to plan for projects and capital improvements.

II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

To provide more guidance to administering agencies on outreach methods, venues, and media, we recommend the following additions be made to following sections:

V.F.3. Outreach (Page 2-19)

We suggest the following additions and deletions be made to point d):

- *Tabling at community events such as fairs or festivals.*
- *Coordinate and/or contract directly with community leaders and grassroots community-based organizations to attend and/or present at existing community group meetings.*
- *Providing materials in other languages and/or interpretation services; and other enabling services such as childcare, food and transportation facilitation.*~~or~~

VI.A.10 Support transparency and provide public access to information on program activities and outcomes (Page 1-43)

-Public outreach events. *Publicize workshops, community meetings, public hearings, and other outreach events well in advance of the event date. Workshops and meeting notices can be publicized via local (bilingual) radio or news stations, or be posted in public locations such as schools, libraries, community centers, medical clinics, bus stops or other transit hubs, and grocery stores. Post materials related to the event (e.g. agendas, presentations, draft documents) and provide a mechanism for the public to ask questions before the event or submit comments after the event. To improve accessibility, provide materials in other languages ~~or~~ and provide language interpretation services, and select locations and timing that encourage stakeholder participation. Provide outreach information for posting on the California Climate Investments website (www.cacalimateinvestments.ca.gov).*

III. 3-STEP PROCESS: IDENTIFYING AB 1550 POPULATIONS, ADDRESSING COMMUNITY OR HOUSEHOLD NEEDS, & DETERMINING PROJECT BENEFITS

Step 1- AB 1550 Populations Jobs and Job Training

The first options under Step 1 directly coincide with the requirements listed in AB 1550. We believe that Step 1's very last option ("does the project provide jobs or job training to **residents of low-income households?**") solely will not be an accurate indicator that the project will satisfy these requirements. While jobs and job training for residents of low-income households are critical to advancing economic justice, this is better suited to be embedded in Step 3 - Project Benefits.

Step 2 - Addresses an Important Need for a Community or Household

We believe the 3-Step approach begins to strengthen the Climate Investments Program's community engagement elements and is the first step in ensuring that projects are driven and lead by disadvantaged communities. However, we recommend that agencies and/or applicants be required to demonstrate that they have completed A, B, C, and D under Step 2. Employing all four of these approaches will allow for a stronger community & household need identification process. B and D alone do not allow for resident engagement and inclusion in the community/household need identification process and may result in the applicant and/or agencies identifying community needs that are not applicable to that community.

Step 3- Project Benefits

The last two options in Step 3 for each of the programs are both regarding total project work hours performed by residents of an AB 1550 community. To begin to foster economic equality and ensure more residents have access to economic opportunity, we suggest 35% project work hours be performed by residents of an AB 1550 community. All opportunities should also allow for residents to "participate in job training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials or certifications." We recommend the following edits to these two benefits:

- ~~— Project includes recruitment, agreements, policies or other approaches that are consistent with federal and state law and result in at least 25 percent of project work hours performed by residents of an AB 1550 community, or by residents of low-income households; or~~
- Project includes recruitment, agreements, policies or other approaches that are consistent with federal and state law and result in at least ~~40~~ 35 percent of project work hours performed by residents of an AB 1550 community, or by residents of low-income households, participating in job training programs which lead to industry-recognized credentials or certifications.

IV. PROJECT BENEFITS

Active Transportation and Transit

Public transit and active transportation infrastructure investments and improvements should not only improve connectivity to within a community, but should also improve connectivity between communities. For example, disadvantaged communities and smaller, rural communities do not always contain the basic services or businesses that residents may need on a day-to-day basis, such as medical clinics or schools. Residents, therefore, must travel to nearby, more affluent cities or communities in order to access these services. Additionally, transit systems in historically neglected communities are often unreliable, expensive,

We recommend that programs under these categories include the following benefits under Step 3 in Appendix 2.A:

- The project increases handicap accessibility/mobility and enhances safety for disabled individuals.
- [for transit programs] The project improves connectivity from disadvantaged communities to cities or communities in which medical or legal services, large employers, learning centers such as continuation schools, community colleges and universities, libraries, public and private schools, community centers, grocery stores, or other services/businesses are located.
- [for transit programs] The project expands transit operations (i.e. extended hours, increased route frequency, additional/extended routes).
- [for transit programs] The project improves bus transit infrastructure (i.e. bus stops, shelters, and lights).
- [for transit programs] The project increases rider affordability (i.e. transit passes for low-income residents, youth, students, or elderly).

Waste Diversion and Utilization

To ensure waste diversion projects do not result in negative localized impacts to air quality or water sources, we suggest the following addition:

Step 3-Project Benefits

B. Project reduces odor causing pollutants (such as H₂S or NH₃) or criteria air pollutant or toxic air contaminant emissions in an AB 1550 community without increasing any other criteria air pollutant or toxic air contaminant emissions or emitting contaminants/pollutants into groundwater sources.

Healthy Soils

To ensure small, minority farmers have access to this program, we recommend the following addition to the Project Benefits listed under this section:

-Project increases small, disadvantaged farm-owners ability to access alternative and expanded market channels.

*

*

*

*

*

Thank you for your considerations of these comments. We look forward to continuing to work with staff at the Air Resources Board when the Funding Guidelines are updated to reflect AB 617 implementation and new Climate Investment programs to secure air quality and co-benefits to disadvantaged communities.

Sincerely,

Nikita Daryanani

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

Community Alliance for Agroecology

Keith Bergthold

Fresno Metro Ministry

Kevin Hamilton, RRT

Central California Asthma Collaborative

Jim Grant

Roman Catholic Diocese of Fresno