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Assembly California Legislature



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March 11, 2016

Mary D. Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Location of Southern California Facility

Dear Chair Nichols,

I was recently apprised of the California Air Resource Board (CARB) staff report containing a recommendation to move the Air Resource Board's new Southern California Laboratory to Pomona, rather than Riverside. I strongly urge the Board to designate Riverside as the location of this project.

There are several points regarding this decision that warrant further consideration:

1. The University of Riverside (UCR) presents a unique opportunity for collaborations to study the comprehensive effects of air pollution and innovative solutions to combat it. In the 2015-2016 fiscal year alone, the University was awarded \$23.16 million in active contracts and grants related to air quality research. Faculty addressing air quality are found in various departments, including engineering, medicine, public policy, business, and agricultural sciences. Moreover, the Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT) has 95 active research grants and contracts totaling nearly \$22 million that will either directly or indirectly reduce air pollution in California and across the United States.
2. CARB funds nearly 13 percent of UCR's air-quality-related research. The remaining 87 percent of funding comes from the U.S. Department of Energy, the National Institutes of Health, the Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, and industry. It would not be easy or prudent to transfer CARB's contracts and grants to a new center it may create. Instead, a sensible course of action for CARB is to continue to leverage UCR's large amounts of federal, state, and industry funding that is severely lacking at Cal Poly Pomona.
3. I understand the concerns that ARB staff has with the distance to Riverside. However, the relative distances of the Pomona and Riverside sites have been known since the beginning of the selection

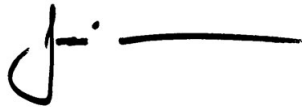
process. It is curious then, that the proximity issue was only raised earlier this year, yet became the primary criteria for the final site recommendation.

4. I am also concerned with the effect that the Pomona site will have on the students in the College of Agriculture at Cal Poly. I understand that students have raised concerns over the use of their Spadra Farm land for the new CARB laboratory. This property is an important educational tool for those students, and it is worrisome that student concerns weren't fully addressed prior to further assessment of the site.

Historically, Riverside has played a key role in understanding and mitigating the effects of air pollution. In this endeavor, the Riverside county delegation, business community, and the University of Riverside are united in their support. Given the points discussed above, I hope you and your fellow board members decide to locate the new CARB laboratory in Riverside.

I would be happy to discuss this issue further, or address any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line.

Jose Medina
Assemblymember, 61st District