



April 28, 2014

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Darrell Johnson  
Chief Executive Officer

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

Re: Comments on Proposed First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan

Dear Chairman Nichols:

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Proposed First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan (Scoping Plan Update), as released on February 1, 2014. OCTA looks forward to working closely with the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to meet the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction requirements under AB 32 (Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006), leveraging available funding to not only reduce emissions, stimulate the economy, and meet statewide infrastructure needs, while maintaining regional flexibility to allow consistency with local priorities and demographic demands.

OCTA supports the recommendations regarding increased active transportation opportunities, expanded rail and public transportation, and emphasis on providing funding and incentives for transportation measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including those associated with the implementation of SB 375 (Chapter 728, Statutes of 2008). However, as raised in OCTA's November 1, 2014, comment letter on the Discussion Draft of the Climate Change Scoping Plan First Update, OCTA recommends further examination of the following issues.

SB 375 Implementation

The Scoping Plan Update places heavy emphasis on implementation of SB 375 as a primary means for achieving GHG emission reduction goals. OCTA worked closely with the Orange County Council of Governments and Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to create a subregional sustainable communities strategy (SCS), pursuant to SB 375, which served as Orange County's input into SCAG's 2012 regional SCS. A common need expressed by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), including SCAG, is to identify a sustainable, long-term source of funding to implement each SCS.

OCTA recognizes this need and supports the recommendations within the Scoping Plan Update for the state to provide access to financial resources and incentives necessary to achieve the regional GHG emission reduction targets established under SB 375. However, OCTA would encourage future iterations of the Scoping Plan Update to go further. Recommendations should be included related to finding a sustainable funding source for implementation of strategies related to active transportation, congestion management measures, and the associated capital and operational improvements required for public transportation. This should be done in a manner that protects existing investments within local sales tax measures, consistent with SB 375. In addition, measures need to be taken related to modernizing the regulatory environment related to these projects to allow for expedited and cost-effective delivery. This can include further modernizing the California Environmental Quality Act process and state requirements for farebox recovery for transit systems.

The Scoping Plan update currently proposes that the ARB will work on completing a technical review to inform the need for any appropriate revisions to the SB 375 regional GHG emission reduction targets. OCTA urges the ARB to allow sufficient additional time for measures included in recently adopted SCS to be implemented before revising the targets. Many of the measures require a long lead time for implementation, and many adopted SCSs have identified funding gaps to implement current measures. Rather than an immediate revision to the targets, attention must be devoted to developing funding and incentives supporting implementation of adopted SCSs, in addition to improving the associated modeling tools to ensure accuracy.

#### Zero Emission Fleet Transition

Throughout the Scoping Plan Update, recommendations are made to transition existing fleets to zero or near-zero emission technology dominantly fueled by electricity or hydrogen. Specific sectors recommended for such conversion include passenger transportation, such as public transit and rail.

Large scale investments have already been made in transitioning transit vehicle fleets to natural gas, and similar efforts are underway with other types of vehicles, all with the goal of improving air quality and meeting environmental standards. Before requiring transition to electricity and hydrogen, further evidence should be made available to demonstrate why natural gas is not competitive as a future fuel use. The Scoping Plan Update also does not

discuss how the state will ensure low-cost electricity for use in operating public transportation. This will need to be a priority before any transition takes place to prevent cost increases due to the heavy demand placed on the grid.

The desire to increase the use of public transportation must also be weighed against concurrent efforts to transition vehicle technology. Any recommendations to transition existing transit bus and rail fleets to electricity or hydrogen, must first consider the current state of technology, as well as the associated costs of not only the vehicles, but also infrastructure. In some circumstances, funding can be more effective when invested in expanding service, or incentivizing the use of transit, rather than investing in new technology.

#### Freight System Planning

The Scoping Plan Update recommends extensive measures related to reduction of emissions within the freight sector, referencing existing efforts to develop a 2014 Sustainable Freight Strategy. Parallel freight strategy efforts are already underway through the California Freight Advisory Committee and the development of the California Freight Mobility Plan, which will seek to inform eventual plans at the federal level to ensure California's competitiveness in any eventual funding. In addition, extensive freight planning efforts have been undertaken in Southern California through the Southern California Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan and the formation of the Southern California National Freight Gateway Collaboration. Any efforts completed by the ARB should be fully informed by these previous and concurrent efforts to prevent duplication and to ensure collaboration in making any specific recommendations. The ultimate goal should be to ensure all stakeholders, including public and private entities, have mutually agreed upon objectives for an efficient freight transportation system.

#### Interim Emission Targets

The Scoping Plan Update recommends that the state establish a 2030 GHG emission reduction target. Although it is suggested that such a target may be similar to that recommended by the European Commission (40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030), no specific target is recommended or established within the Scoping Plan Update. The process for adopting an interim year target should be clearly defined, as well as the reasoning for recommending a 2030 target in favor of 2035 (the target year for SB 375).

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Moreover, it is unclear if the ARB has authority to establish such a target. If legislation is needed, the Scoping Plan Update should be clarified to detail that plan. If it is assumed that ARB has existing statutory authority to go forward in establishing such a target, the Scoping Plan Update should reference that authority. In no case should a target be established without a complete environmental and economic review being conducted, subject to thorough public review.

OCTA looks forward to continued collaboration with the ARB to promote strategies that allow us to provide cost-effective, reliable, and safe transportation to our customers while doing our part to improve California's air quality. If you have any questions please contact Kristin Essner, Principal Government Relations Representative, at (714) 560-5754.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell Johnson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Darrell Johnson  
Chief Executive Officer

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c: Platinum Advisors, LLC