

California State Senate

SENATOR
BOB HUFF

TWENTY-NINTH SENATE DISTRICT

March 3, 2016

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

RE: Southern California Consolidation Project's Site Location

Dear Chair Nichols:

I have been following the status of ARB's Southern California Consolidation Project closely as the results will impact not only my District, but Los Angeles County as well. I was pleased to read the ARB Staff Report Analysis of Sites for the Southern California Relocation Project document released February 11, 2016 recommended the Pomona site as the proposed location for ARB and I am writing to strongly urge the California Air Resources Board to adopt the staff's site recommendation for Pomona for multiple reasons.

First, LA County cannot afford the loss of approximately 400 jobs to Riverside County and to do so is unacceptable. Those skilled jobs, and the accompanying economic development components around 400 jobs such as housing, retail, spousal jobs, etc., need to remain in LA County. Figure 10 in your Staff Report clearly shows most of the El Monte ARB employees currently reside around LA and these employees are already engrained in LA County. Moving to Riverside would have a wider effect on the County beyond these 400 jobs.

Second, the state needs to be good stewards of its resources, and allowing ARB to relocate to Riverside would prove costly for the State. As stated in the Staff Report, ARB is required per the recently revised Professional Engineers in California Government (PECG) Bargaining Unit 9 MOU with California to pay relocation expenses to qualified employees, which effects "almost 80% of the [ARB] staff," at an estimated cost of "\$1.0 million to about \$7.3 million" to the state. Next, the Staff Report specifies that a move to Riverside would "likely involve relocation, resignation, or retirement of ARB employees," given the differences in driving commutes and long public transit commutes. Keeping ARB in LA County "would likely retain more of ARB's existing and highly trained workforce necessary to support ARB's ability to carry out its responsibilities" and "would be much less disruptive to ARB's operations because there would [be] less disruption to ARB employees." Relocating to Riverside would cause undue financial burdens and longer term concerns for ARB in maintaining their quality staff and relatedly the outstanding services ARB provides. The work that ARB does is important to the state, and we rely on the quality results that come out of your facilities; the loss of employees that would undoubtedly occur if ARB relocated to Riverside would be a detriment.