

October 29, 2009

Mary Nichols  
Chair, Air Resources Board  
1001 "I" Street  
P.O. Box 2815  
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Chairwoman Nichols and members of the board:

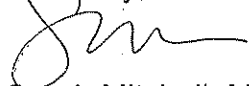
I urge you to adopt the comprehensive recommendations from the Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC) at your November 19, 2009, meeting. Crafted by a representative group of stakeholders and your able staff, the RTAC report carefully balances greenhouse gas reduction goals with social equity considerations of the impacts on lower-income Californians.

Although supportive of the report as a whole, I urge your particular consideration of the following recommendations:

1. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) should update their data collection and modeling to quantify the greenhouse gas reduction impacts of housing affordability, gentrification, and jobs-housing fit. As defined in the report, "jobs-housing fit" is the extent to which the rents and mortgages in a community are affordable to people who work there. In theory, a stronger jobs-housing fit should allow Californians to reduce their commute times and distances. However, this link needs to be tested and quantified, as do the links between home affordability generally and gentrification.
2. Performance measures for the sustainable communities strategy should include the jobs-housing fit and 5 other housing-related measures.
3. MPOs' progress in meeting goals should be measured through modeling and other sound scientific approaches.
4. The co-benefits of greenhouse gas reductions should be measured and reported.

I appreciate your consideration of my views.

Sincerely,



Sarah Mitchell, MSW