



Larry Forester

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GATEWAY CITIES
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**Statement before the California Air Resources Board
Proposed AB-32 Scoping Plan
By
Councilmember Larry Forester, City of Signal Hill
December 11, 2008**

Madam Chair, Members of the Board. I am here on behalf of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments to comment on the Proposed Scoping Plan that is before you for approval. The Gateway Cities COG consists of 27 Cities in the south eastern portion of Los Angeles County, including the City of Long Beach, comprising over 2.2 million residents.

The Gateway COG is deeply concerned about climate change and is eager to assist the Board in achieving necessary reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. With the assistance of CARB, the Gateway Cities COG has been a national leader in reducing green house gas emissions at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach through several innovative programs, including our truck replacement and retrofit program.

This program has resulted in the replacement of more than 600 heavy polluting, old diesel trucks to date. To that end, we believe the activities the Board will mandate under AB 32 should initially be those like the truck replacement program that will yield immediate reduction results in a cost-effective manner.

Given the limited resources that cities, like the state, have to work with in the current troubled economic times, we urge the Board to emphasize cleaner fuels, alternative energy sources and transit funding over long-range and less scientifically understood programs, such as land use regulation. Although you have been urged by the Sierra Club to increase regional greenhouse gas reduction targets from 2 million metric tons statewide to 5 million metric tons, we ask you to defer this option until you receive input from the Regional Targets Advisory Committee that will help you set reduction targets related to land use. Since an increase from 2 million metric tons to 5 million metric tons is not necessary to reach the 2020 goal, the Sierra Club's request is premature to implement the increase at this stage of the scoping process.

We concur with the Southern California Association of Governments and the League of California Cities, in supporting SB-375, cities and counties are accepting their responsibility for green house gas reductions. The greatest thing that could happen is for all local governments to achieve, and even greatly exceed, the established targets. AB 32 needs to be sensible and successful, so that California can continue to lead the nation in reducing green house gas reductions. Setting the target too high, with out understanding the very real risks to local government, could lead to failure and other states are less likely to follow our lead.

There are always unintended consequences with any regulation. Adequate public transit justifies the higher-density land uses that will cut green house gases. Yet our local transit agencies are under pressure as their budgets have been reduced and they are struggling with operating deficits. Transit services and increases in housing density must be carefully timed in the Gateway Cities, in order to avoid the worse of all possible worlds – increased density and increased traffic congestion. This

fact alone argues for a realistic approach on the CARB target. The targets can be revised as we become successful in providing transit near new housing sites.

The members of the Gateway COG join SCAG in asking you to make a strong commitment to including financial incentives in the Scoping Plan and to identify a permanent source of funding for planning and implementation of regional and local activities. This funding should be based on population or a "fair share" allocated to California's most populous subregions. We agree with SCAG in asking for direct representation, including sub-regions, on the Regional Targets Advisory Committee. The Committee will not be able to set realistic emission reduction targets without input from local governments across the state. California has the population and complexity that demands that this Committee be truly representative as they help you set targets and requirements that will affect everyone living in the state.

The Gateway Cities COG stands ready to work with the Board and SCAG in implementing effective programs to reduce green house gas reductions. Thank you for your consideration of these requests.
