

City of Richmond
Thomas K. Butt, City Council Member



June 21, 2010

California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for implementation of SB 375

Honorable Chairwoman Mary Nichols, Board Members, and Staff:

I am a 15-year Richmond City Council member and chair of the Local Government Commission, urging you to support SB 375 implementation. I agree with the findings in the *SB 375 Impact Analysis Report*, released June 6, 2010, by the Urban Land Institute: "Cities in California could be more sustainable—both economically and environmentally—if the state wisely implements SB 375, a law designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and auto dependency."

According to the ULI report, the law has the potential to make a positive change in the growth patterns of California's urban regions. "If implemented well, SB 375 would help California accommodate growth in ways that are economically sound, environmentally responsible, and socially beneficial," the report says.

In Richmond, we have anticipated and planned ahead for AB 375 implementation by preparing a cutting edge General Plan that supports reduced use of automobiles and increased walkability, biking and public transit. It includes a Climate Element, a Pedestrian and Bike Plan and the first Health Element in California. Richmond has encouraged green business, and is proud that Sunpower, one of the largest U.S. PV manufacturers and contractors is located on our waterfront. Our City Council has voted to oppose any suspension of AB 32 and looks forward to embracing the implementation of AB 375.

Ironically, Richmond is the home of California's second largest oil refinery. Our residents suffer from pollution, explosions and shelter-in-place orders so that the rest of California can benefit from gasoline. The less gasoline Californians use, the less pollution our residents suffer from.

Air pollution is a major threat to public health in California, with alarming rates of asthma and lung disease, especially among children. Each year, California's air pollution crisis contributes to 19,000 premature deaths, hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks, and thousands of trips to the hospital for California families. That's why AB 32 and SB 375 are strongly supported by the American Lung Association in California and AARP (American Association of Retired Persons).

According to California's nonpartisan State Legislative Analyst's Office, failing to implement AB 32 and SB 375 could "dampen additional investments in clean energy technologies or in so-called green jobs by private firms, thereby resulting in less economic activity." Clean energy businesses and technologies are exceptional bright spots in our economy. AB 32 has put California in a unique position to lead the clean energy and technology market, both in the United States and abroad.

- 500,000 employees work in clean technology or green jobs in California.
- Since 2005, California green jobs have grown 10 times faster than the statewide average.
- California's clean technology sector received \$9 billion cumulative venture capital investment from 2005-09, including \$2.1 billion in investment capital in 2009 – more than five times the investment in our nearest competitor, Massachusetts.
- There are more than 12,000 clean tech companies in California.

Focusing growth in healthy, active communities designed around transit, walking, and biking will allow people to incorporate physical activity into their daily routines, reducing heart disease, stress, and obesity. It will also help clean the air, reducing asthma attacks and other impacts of poor air quality. It could reduce travel costs and let people spend less time in traffic and more time with family and friends.

Our local efforts to meet these goals will have greater success when connected to the efforts of other cities and towns. We look forward to working with our neighbors to create a Sustainable Communities Strategy that makes our communities healthier and our regional economy stronger.

Sincerely,

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Tom Butt