



BETH KROM, Councilmember

www.ci.irvine.ca.us

City of Irvine, One Civic Center Plaza, P.O. Box 19575, Irvine, CA 92623-9575

(949) 724-6233

June 23, 2010

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

Dear Chair Nichols and Fellow CARB Board Members,

I am writing in support of the interests that SB 375 seeks to address. While many challenges exist in the implementation of this legislation, the objectives it seeks to achieve are critically important if we are to successfully align land use, transportation and air quality planning on a regional basis throughout the state. We must remain focused on the objectives at the heart of this legislation, and provide the resources and tools necessary to local governments and MPOs to support its success.

As the former Mayor and current City Councilmember in a city that has taken pride in our innovative planning model and history of environmental stewardship, I support the goals that SB 375 seeks to achieve. As the former Mayor and current City Councilmember in a city which, despite being a leader in producing a full spectrum of housing opportunities, received nearly 43% of Orange County's housing allocation in the most recent RHNA process, I am well aware that implementation of any legislative proscription on a regional basis can be difficult — especially where leadership challenges and proprietary thinking work against the process.

There are many valuable benefits that can be derived from the effective implementation of SB 375, both economic and in targeted reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. The state of California has been, and must remain a leader in environmental stewardship. Applying smart growth principles that bring housing closer to jobs, encourages better, healthier and cleaner mobility solutions through transit access, walking, biking and smart streets makes good sense and will enhance quality of life for millions of people throughout the state.


To achieve these goals, the tools to be successful must be provided to cities, counties and MPOs. As with most things unknown, there exists a fear that those who have already taken steps to move voluntarily in the right direction will not be given credit for those efforts. Here in Orange County, there is significant opposition expressed by local leaders to AB 32 and SB 375 because they see these as "unfunded mandates" rather than forward-thinking initiatives to advance "smart growth" principles and better integrated transportation and development. Economic challenges and the loss of revenues to the state only reinforce the fear that the carrot and the stick are out of alignment.

The successful implementation of SB 375 will hinge on the success of the Sustainable Community Strategies process and the ability of cities, all of whom sit at a different point on the planning continuum, be encouraged to succeed rather than being challenged to fail. Transportation funding dollars are critically important to all planning efforts. We must leverage our knowledge and our vision to demonstrate that by aligning around interests, with the economic and strategic support of the state and resource agencies like CARB, we can remain the most innovative and responsive state in America when it comes to sustainable growth.

I urge you to work with the cities, counties and planning agencies toward the successful implementation of SB 375. If we are to succeed, SB 375 must match its aspirations with the necessary resources to effectively implement. Let's demonstrate that, even in tough times, we can transcend the inclination to contract our thinking, take a collaborative approach and identify the resources necessary to achieve our objectives.

Thank you for your leadership on this and many critical issues facing our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BKrom', written in a cursive style.

Beth Krom
Councilmember