



April X, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: San Diego's Portside AB 617 Community – State Budget Call for Continued Clean Air Investments

Dear Governor Gavin Newsom,

The San Diego Air Basin faces some of the most significant and unique air quality challenges in the state of California. San Diego county is home to unique State economic drivers like the San Diego Port industry, the Tijuana border crossing, the busiest land port of entry in the western hemisphere, and some of the most congested interstates in the country. The San Diego Air Basin is also home to 2 of the 19 AB 617 communities in California. The Border and Portside AB 617 communities of San Diego County are among the most pollution burdened in the state, and the health outcomes for residents that call these communities home continue to trend negatively.¹ As the state weighs funding priorities in the 2024-25 State Budget, it is critical that we continue to support on-going funding for air quality efforts like the California Air Protection Program (CAPP) and HD/MD truck incentives given the impacts that air pollution poses to the health of communities throughout San Diego – in particular the Portside and Border neighborhoods.

The Portside Steering Committee finalized its Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) in 2021 and emphasized the need to encourage clean air technologies, to reduce pollution and improve the health of residents. Through strong collaboration with community members, businesses, public agencies, CBO's, and other stakeholders, the Portside Community Steering Committee (CSC) has demonstrated an ability to implement innovative and transformative clean air strategies that provide the foundation for increased investment under the new state budget. Despite significant progress, more funding is needed to guarantee that clean air goals are accomplished for the region. The Portside CSC offers the following recommendations for inclusion in the state budget and legislation:

Heavy Duty ZE Truck Transition Funding

The transportation sector continues to be one of the largest contributors to pollution in San Diego county. For reference, medium and heavy-duty trucks alone make up only 1% of all vehicles in San Diego but

¹ <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/opinion/commentary/story/2023-05-16/opinion-san-diego-portside-barrio-logan-sherman-heights-pollution-air-quality-envrionmental-racism>



emit 13% of all diesel particulate matter (DPM), a major component of fine particulate matter (PM) in the region, which contributes to lung cancer and aggravates asthma. Moreover, medium and heavy-duty trucks emit 15% of all oxides of nitrogen (NOx), which is a precursor to regional Ozone and particulate pollution and contributes to respiratory and other illnesses.² With a much more stringent PM2.5 standard recently announced by EPA, this challenge will only be more significant for San Diego.³

This air pollution makes climate change worse and with the increasing frequency of extreme heat, San Diego's poor air quality is a potentially deadly threat to residents in portside communities with disproportionate rates of respiratory illnesses.

The Portside CSC supports the inclusion of funding to deploy more zero-emission equipment and related infrastructure across the maritime and transportation/goods-movement sector, including for electric forklifts, electric yard trucks, shore-power, electric Heavy-duty trucks and other zero-emission, low carbon technologies. The Portside CSC was disappointed to see that there was minimal funding allocated to CARB's Low Carbon Transportation Programs, despite maintaining the commitment of \$10 billion in clean transportation investments through the state's Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) package.⁴

The Portside CSC has developed clear electrification goals. For example, the Port of San Diego's Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS) calls for the electrification of all HD/MD trucks calling to the cargo terminals to be zero emission by 2030 – 5 years before state regulations like the Advanced Clean Fleet rule. Currently less than 1% of trucks at the Port are Zero emission – emphasizing the need for continued incentive funding.

We request not delaying funding for these critical programs which have been underfunded for years and ask the state to deliver on its previous commitments and provide the needed relief to low-income and disadvantaged communities that continue to suffer disproportionately from harmful pollution.

Sustained Funding for Community Air Protection Program (CAPP) for Disadvantaged Communities

Air districts have a central role in implementing the AB 617 Community Air Protection Program, which is an important program that provides investment in communities that have not received adequate resources in the past. AB 617 requires the annual selection of communities throughout the state for additional monitoring, community outreach, and community focused emission reduction planning in order to measurably improve public health. Without sufficient funding, the work of AB 617 communities may not be possible.

² Page 2. <file:///S:/APCD%20SD/APCD%20Rules/Rule%2056%20Indirect%20Source%20Rule/ISR-Framework-English.pdf>

³ <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-02/pm-naaqs-overview.pdf>

⁴ <https://greenlining.org/2024/2024-ca-budget-cuts-and-defers-equity/>



This includes both the funding for air district implementation and funding for projects that reduce emissions in these historically underserved communities. We respectfully request that this year's budget restore funding for the Community Air Protection Program to \$300 million as follows: \$60 million for implementation, \$234 million for clean air incentives, and \$6 million for community grants.

We respectfully urge you to consider prioritizing funding for these air quality programs, which cost-effectively protect public health and provide climate benefits. The Portside Community Steering Committee welcomes the opportunity to discuss our suggestions further, and appreciate our ongoing partnership in improving the quality of life for our residents.

Sincerely,

AB 617 Portside Community Steering Committee

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