



# CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

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## **Environmental Justice Communities Call On Governor Brown to Show Real Climate Leadership, Prioritize Most Impacted Communities in Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Budget**

*2018 Requires Urgent Action to Improve Air Quality, Advance Clean Energy, and Increase Local Jobs for Low-Income Communities & Communities of Color*

**Sacramento, CA | January 26, 2018** — Yesterday, Governor Brown's 2018 State of the State laid out a vision for California's leadership at a time when immigrants, people of color, the environment and climate science are under attack. California needs to lead the resistance, but our leadership must lift up the solutions that low-income communities and communities of color already hold. In 2018, Governor Brown must take the bold steps to put his words into action.

**California Environmental Justice Alliance Executive Director Gladys Limon issued the following statement:**

In California, real climate leadership means creating a long-term plan for our state to transition off of fossil fuels while working to protect communities that are already suffering from the impacts of climate change and oil and gas production. We need solutions that create healthy, stable jobs that protect both people and the planet. The many existing climate policies that Governor Brown outlined must create the most vigorous path possible to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, particularly at their source in frontline communities. We are already seeing the devastating impacts of our changing climate, as the most recent wildfires demonstrated, and as we look to fund adaptation needs, we must ensure that communities on the frontlines are prioritized for protection and investments.

To be a real climate leader, California must advance the 100 percent renewable energy economy that the climate change crisis demands. As we build the new energy economy and become more energy efficient, we must support distributed renewable energy that serves diverse communities, especially low-income Californians. And while Governor Brown outlined many transportation priorities, we need a massive reduction in transportation-related emissions and investments in clean, affordable transportation options, including public transit and zero emission vehicles.

Governor Brown also uplifted AB 617 as the state's major initiative to address the long-standing air quality issues in environmental justice communities. While we look forward to working with agencies to develop this new program, its anticipated benefits will not be seen in communities until at least 2020. That is an unacceptable delay for the health of so many residents living in dangerously polluted communities. AB 617 cannot take the place of urgent measures that community groups have long pushed for to improve air quality now. The success of AB 617 will also depend on the Administration's willingness to create the strongest possible standards within the program.

There remain many environmental justice issues that Governor Brown did not address in his State of the State. We are pleased that his recent budget includes funding to help secure clean drinking water for

Californians; it is long past time to ensure a permanent source of funding for safe and affordable drinking water. Similarly, reform of the broken Department of Toxic Substances Control is long overdue.

As his tenure comes to a close, we invite Governor Brown to visit the most vulnerable communities who are hit first and worst by climate change, contaminated drinking water, and hazardous waste sites. It is only by seeing the lived experiences of low-income communities and communities of color and listening to their stories that he can truly understand the dirty air and health hazards that thousands of families are exposed to everyday. We believe that engaging with real climate leaders on the frontlines in our state will inspire him to take the necessary steps to address their needs and shape California's climate policy to advance the real climate leadership we urgently need.

Now, more than ever, as the impacts of climate change are becoming more severe, we need investments in programs that will meaningfully protect the health and quality of life of the most overburdened communities. The proposed Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund budget released today is a mix of positive measures with areas of concern. We hope to see these funding priorities shift in the budget process.

**Reductions in transportation emissions:** Environmental justice communities need to see accelerated adoption of zero-emissions technologies across our entire transportation sector from public transit to the goods movement, prioritizing cleaning up the heavy duty trucks that are clogging so many lungs. While we support the proposed, large-scale effort to reduce emissions, California's overall approach must go beyond replacing every car on the road with zero-emissions vehicles. We need a more robust set of strategies that include regulatory measures and strong GHG reduction targets, not just incentives.

**AB 617:** We are cautious about the large line item for implementation of AB 617 as there has been very little community engagement around the already allocated GGRF funding from last year, and significant concerns that this money is not being tied directly to community priorities.

**Transformative Climate Communities and Community TA:** We are pleased to see funding for programs like Transformative Climate Communities (\$25 million) and Community TA that have the opportunity to bring the most benefits to EJ communities, though unfortunately in the proposed budget receive relatively small funding amounts. We are concerned that a program like dairy digestors, which have significant negative local impacts, is poised to receive almost \$100 million, after a windfall last year as a result of cap and trade negotiations.

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**California Environmental Justice Alliance** is a statewide, community-led alliance that works to achieve environmental justice by advancing policy solutions. We unite the powerful local organizing of our members in the communities most impacted by environmental hazards – low-income communities and communities of color – to create comprehensive opportunities for change at a statewide level. We build the power of communities across California to create policies that will alleviate poverty and pollution. Together, we are growing the statewide movement for environmental health and social justice.  
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