

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
2020 SEP 17 PM 1:12  
CLERK OF THE BOARD  
OF SUPERVISORS



**NATHAN FLETCHER**  
SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** September 30, 2020

**TO:** Air Pollution Control District Board

**SUBJECT**  
**SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY EMISSIONS REDUCTION PLAN (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

**OVERVIEW**

In order to meaningfully address environmental justice and communities most impacted by both the COVID-19 pandemic and poor air quality, the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) needs to be a leading partner. The linkage between local air pollution and the pandemic makes the calls for environmental justice that much stronger.

To further these necessary objectives, I am recommending that two existing staff members within the APCD be leveraged to focus on environmental justice and to strengthen existing initiatives. These staff members could assist with development and implementation of a strong Community Emissions Reduction Plan as required by Assembly Bill 617 (Community Air Protection Program), as well as facilitate meaningful community engagement and participation in this process that includes and makes full use of the AB 617 Steering Committee, and fulfills the legislative mandate. As the APCD transitions next year, these staff members can fulfill many additional important roles.

Today’s action outlines the proposed staffing modifications that would support development and implementation of the CERP and other environmental justice initiatives and priorities.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**  
**SUPERVISOR NATHAN FLETCHER**

1. Direct the Air Pollution Control Officer to implement the following staffing assignment modifications to support development and implementation of the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP):
  - a. Assign an existing Deputy Director position and an existing Program Coordinator position within the Air Pollution Control District to assist with the following:
    - i. Develop strategies to engage environmental justice stakeholders and the AB 617 Community in policy and budget development, and priority-setting.

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- ii. Help shape agency programs, including the Community Emissions Reduction Program, permit fee structures, APCD rule development, the Community Air Protection Program, and facilitate multi-lingual community relations.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 Operational Plan for the Air Pollution Control District. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

### **BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

### **BACKGROUND**

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (APCD) has begun addressing environmental justice through the Assembly Bill (AB) 617 Community Air Protection Program Steering Committee and community engagement process. The Portside Environmental Justice Communities were selected for the AB 617 program in part because of the disproportionate air quality impacts on communities of color. One of the AB 617 requirements is the development of a Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP).

The objective of a CERP is to “focus and accelerate new actions that go beyond existing State and regional programs to provide direct reductions in air pollution emissions and exposure within overburdened communities.”<sup>1</sup> Once approved by the local air district, the plan will be evaluated by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for compliance with state requirements. CARB has developed a suite of evaluation criteria, including local capacity to implement proposed changes.

Staff has already begun development of the CERP, which will be presented to the Air Pollution Control District Board for approval in November 2020, and then the District will seek subsequent approval from CARB. Adoption of the CERP represents an important first step, but tailored infrastructure and supports within the APCD is needed to facilitate successful implementation of the CERP and the CERP Strategies.

As such, I propose to redirect two staff positions within the APCD to support development and implementation of the CERP. These two staff positions were approved in the Fiscal Year (FY) 20-21 County Operational Plan for APCD. This direction will help APCD achieve our environmental justice goals, the CERP Strategies, and ensure we are meeting the needs of our AB 617 community.

Beyond successful CERP implementation, these positions are needed to support the integral work of the APCD through a new equity lens – in addition to ensuring regional air quality compliance, there is a new emphasis on mitigating local air quality impacts. Poor air quality disproportionately impacts hurt communities of color, and the global coronavirus pandemic has further heightened

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/apcd/PDF/AB\\_617/CARB%20Blueprint%20for%20CERP.pdf](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/apcd/PDF/AB_617/CARB%20Blueprint%20for%20CERP.pdf)

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the need to address the serious and deadly underlying health issues that result from poor air quality. Harvard researchers have shown that people living in areas of higher pollution are more likely to be seriously ill or die from COVID-19. This is morally and fundamentally wrong.

The tragic fire aboard the USS Richard Bonhomme that started on July 19, 2020 further polluted San Diego's environmental justice communities, and made clear the need for protocols to mitigate and alert the community in the event of future hazardous air quality events. As an example, communication lines to Spanish-speaking members of the community were initiated during the ship fire, but could be enhanced.

Mobile air quality monitoring has provided the APCD with block-by-block emissions data which allow for public health-based decisions to be tailored to neighborhoods according to need. Access to data and community input has been important in shifting agency focus from regional emissions to neighborhood-level emissions and their impact on public health.

Additional change is underfoot for the APCD, as described in Assembly Bill 423 (Gloria, 2019). The composition of the APCD Board will be expanded and include an Environmental Justice seat, and will become a separate entity from the County of San Diego starting March 1, 2021. As such, there are opportunities to integrate equity and environmental justice at the core of the agency mission by initializing these changes today.

CARB has staff dedicated toward environmental justice, and can serve as a guidepost for these positions at the APCD. I am hopeful we can be a model for other Air Districts in the state by effectively integrating environmental justice with APCD functions.

We can develop a more culturally competent and multi-lingual engagement strategy with environmental justice communities and begin steps to rescind the racist redlining that created many of our environmental justice communities in the first place. These steps to refocus staff will allow environmental justice to be the lens through which decisions are made by our APCD, rather than an after-thought.

Today's recommendations ask the Air Pollution Control Officer to allocate two staff positions to this endeavor, and to research, develop, and engage with stakeholders to meet the characteristics and objectives outlined in this proposal.

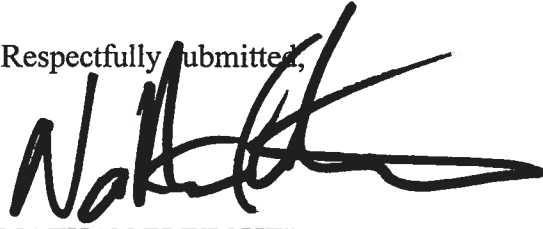
I urge your support.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's proposed action to dedicate staff to support the Community Emissions Reduction Program within the Air Pollution Control District supports the Operational Excellence Strategic Initiative in the County of San Diego's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan to make health, safety, and thriving a focus of all policies and programs through internal and external collaboration.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nathan Fletcher', written over the typed name below.

NATHAN FLETCHER  
Supervisor, Fourth District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**       Yes     No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**  
 Yes     No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**  
Click here to enter text.

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**  
Click here to enter text.

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**  
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**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**  
N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION  
NUMBER(S):**  
N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** Supervisorial District 4

**OTHER CONCURRENCE(S):** N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

Emily Wier  
Name  
619-531-5544  
Phone  
Emily.Wier@sdcounty.ca.gov  
E-mail

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