

Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Oversight hearing on Implementation of AB 617 – March 18, 2019
Testimony
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

Good afternoon Chair Friedman and members of the committee. My name is Mark Loutzenhiser with the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District. I am here with my fellow division managers Amy Roberts and Jaime Lemus. Ms. Roberts directs our Stationary Source Division, Mr. Lemus our Transportation and Climate Change Division, and I lead our Program Coordination Division. Dr. Alberto Ayala, our Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer, apologizes for not being able to be here due to a prior travel commitment that could not be rescheduled. We thank you for the opportunity to share our experience with AB 617 and the work with our South Sacramento – Florin community. We would also like to acknowledge the support of our state representatives, especially Assemblymember Cooper, Assemblymember McCarty, and Senator Dr. Richard Pan, who have become champions of the Sacramento Valley clean air cause. In addition, we benefit from the support and leadership of our Board of Directors, and especially Sacramento City Councilmember Larry Carr, who represents part of the south area.

In the brief time we have, we would like to address three key topics. First, our analysis that led to the identification of 10 priority communities in our region including our year-one community in South Sacramento. Second, we will discuss some of the unique aspects of our communities, and how these aspects translate into both challenges and opportunities not readily present in the other communities around the state. Finally, we will talk about what is next moving forward under AB 617. We appreciate the attention you are giving to AB 617 today because we need your help in order to be able to deliver the promise of this important legislation to our communities. Before I proceed, I would like to also recognize the chair and vice-chair of our community steering committee. Mr. Knowlton with the Mack Road Partnership and Ms. Shelby, a long-time resident of South Sacramento who will be addressing the committee after me.

So let me begin by briefly describing our methodology for identifying the communities in Sacramento County that are most disproportionately impacted by lingering excess pollution. Like many areas across our state, we have made tremendous progress in regional air quality. Over time, we have seen a consistent trend of decreasing pollution concentrations in our ambient air. Unfortunately, we are not in attainment of all national ambient air quality standards and more work remains to improve public health and decrease air pollution in our region. In our AB 617 approach, we considered a number of indicators of pollution impacts and went beyond the sole use of the state's CalEnviroScreen tool. We believe this robust approach more effectively captures exposure to pollution; the relationship between emission sources and sensitive

receptors such as schools and hospitals; and other measures of vulnerability to air pollution such as health disparities based on community health needs assessments conducted by hospitals and socio-economic factors like poverty and unemployment rates. The prioritization for community identification was based on the total weight of the evidence and resulted in the identification of our top 10 communities. Recognizing the air pollution impacts, CARB selected one of our communities, South Sacramento – Florin, in the first year of the program. Let me now zoom in on this community and share a few observations about how implementation is progressing.

South Sacramento – Florin was one of our top ranked communities due to several factors. The community includes areas designated as a disadvantaged community and suffers from heavy impacts from cars and trucks on the freeways and major thoroughfares crisscrossing the area. The community and its boundary as defined by the steering committee are shown in the slide. Our community engagement process is underway and our steering committee has convened several times since December and is meeting both tomorrow and next week. Key concerns highlighted by the community include: emissions from freeways and roadways and impacts from these emissions on sensitive receptors, like children walking to school and/or living near these roadways.

While under very aggressive timelines, with guidance from the steering committee we are on track to meet the state's deadline to initiate community air monitoring by July 1. Equipment will likely include a combination of a mobile lab equipped for the collection of various gaseous and PM pollution samples, complimented by a network of low-cost sensors for saturation monitoring in the community. While low-cost sensors come with limitations, we believe they are a good screening tool and can lead to a better understanding of localized and transient impacts that existing air monitoring networks cannot capture. Hence the benefit of AB 617.

In parallel, we are also working very effectively with our steering committee. As suggested by CARB during their September board hearing when the 10 communities statewide were selected, whether a community is formally identified for air monitoring only, should not detract from the importance of emission reduction plans for taking prompt action to identify the sources of pollution impacts and the options to mitigate them. In this regard, we appeal to this committee and to your fellow legislators to make available Cap-and-Trade funding for incentives for emission reductions in our communities. While we expect much of the focus will rightfully be on incentives for mobile source reductions, we applaud the legislation's wisdom to leave the door open for potential new opportunities for reductions from stationary sources. AB 617 can begin a new chapter in the history of effective pollution control through incentives by launching the right solutions for sensitive receptors like schools and reductions beyond those required from local sources.

On our side, the District is reviewing our rules and updating best available retrofit control technology requirements. We also continue to work with CARB on the new, expected regulatory requirements for emission reporting. We remain hopeful that the legislature will identify the necessary resources we need to implement this new state mandate.

The last point I will cover before I turn it over to our steering committee representatives is where we go from here. The District appreciates the resources allocated in this first year of the program for implementation and incentives. One key take away from our experience is the even greater than anticipated resource need associated with these first communities. The involvement with our community steering committee has been very positive. It has also been more involved than we anticipated, both in time commitments for the public and resources for the District to provide answers and information to the community so they can make well-informed decisions and recommendations.

Moving forward, we will continue to work with CARB and intend to recommend the inclusion of a second community in the Sacramento region for year two of the program. But as we expand into additional impacted communities, sufficient resources from the state will be essential to the success of community monitoring and reductions of local emissions. These neighborhoods all have excess pollution impacts and are expecting action. Rightfully, the promise of AB 617 has raised expectations in our neighborhoods that help is coming. Our agency looks forward to working with you to advocate for adequate and uninterrupted funding so that not only can we implement the program, but maintain progress through the reduction of pollution burdens and improve health outcomes. We again thank our elected representatives and thank Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna, who sits on our District Board and is our regional representative on the CARB board, who has been a strong voice for our cause.

We appreciate the opportunity to share Sacramento's perspective on AB 617 implementation. We would be happy to answer any of your questions now or after Mr. Knowlton and Ms. Shelby address the committee. Thank you.

Witnesses:

Mark Loutzenhiser, Program Coordination, Division Manager

Amy Roberts, Stationary Sources, Division Manager

Jaime Lemus, Transportation and Climate Change, Acting Division Manager

Dr. Alberto Ayala, Executive Director/Air Pollution Control Officer (not present)

City of Sacramento Vice-Mayor Eric Guerra, Chair, Board of Directors, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District