



March 20, 2020

Paul Van Konyenburg, Chair  
 Mitch Wiess, Executive Director  
 California Transportation Commission  
 1120 N Street  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

We, the undersigned organizations, urge the California Transportation Commission to create an Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) to advise the joint meetings between the California Transportation Commission (CTC), California Air Resource Board (CARB), and the Housing and Community Development (HCD). The EAC would partner with the CTC, CARB, and HCD to set the agenda and priorities for the joint meetings and provide holistic solutions to solving our climate crisis.

These joint meetings are important because they are at the intersection of the challenges that California is facing. Providing equitable solutions to transportation, housing, and climate are essential for California to thrive. Right now, Californians are dealing with rising greenhouse

emissions, longer commutes, housing unaffordability, deepening inequity, poor air quality, and more congestion. With an EAC, these meetings could provide meaningful solutions to address those challenges.

According to the Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) forty percent of greenhouse gas emissions come from the transportation sector. In order to reduce emissions, many are pushing for the electrification of transportation across the state. While electric vehicles will help reduce emissions, they alone cannot solve the climate crisis for California. We must begin to prioritize alternatives to cars. Bike paths, public transit, transit-oriented development are all necessary to reduce emissions.

However, the vast majority of our state's transportation funding has gone to highways, leaving millions of low-income communities and communities of color suffering from air pollution and struggling to get around on unsafe streets and unreliable public transportation. Historically, transportation investments built freeways that still divide low-income communities and communities of color. As low-income communities and communities of color face rent increases and displacement, affordable and reliable transportation alternatives become even more necessary beyond urban centers.

The CTC has the heavy burden of diverting spending from the car-centric ways of the past to the multi-modal emission-reducing transit system of the future. These decisions cannot be made in a vacuum. There needs to be a holistic approach to planning and funding transportation for the future; the most equitable solution is an EAC.

In terms of structure, the proposed EAC would have members that represent a variety of interests and experiences. There should be at least eleven members with professional or personal experience in:

- Transportation
- Transit
- Active transportation issues.
- Housing, affordable housing, homelessness, or rental housing issues.
- Youth between 16 and 24.
- Business, economic development, or workforce development.
- Communities most impacted by significant exposure to air pollution.
- Environmental justice organizations.
- Regional land use.
- Climate science, climate change, or climate adaptation.
- Rural community issues.

We are open to further discussing the development of the EAC, including how often this committee should meet, and other logistics. This EAC would be complementary to the direction the CTC is already moving in. With the passage of AB 179 (Cervantes), diverse commissioners have been appointed. The EAC would be a resource for the entire commission to ensure that

all voices are being represented while the CTC shifts California's transportation system to address the challenges the state is facing.

With climate change and deepening inequity occurring across California, it is vital that the EAC and CTC work together to create innovative and equitable solutions.

Sincerely,

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