



***THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE
OF AB 617: ENVISIONING A WAY
FORWARD TOGETHER***

**CONVENING
REPORT**

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JANUARY 2022

UCDAVIS



Table of Contents

Introduction	4
---------------------	----------

Planning Process	4
-------------------------	----------

Convening Programming	5
------------------------------	----------

Convening Sessions.....	6
-------------------------	---

Day 1	7
--------------	----------

Introduction / Welcome Remarks	7
--------------------------------------	---

Presentation of AB 617 Snapshot Report	7
--	---

Keynote Address by Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia	7
--	---

Panel 1: Enforcement Authorities and Collaboration.....	8
---	---

Roundtable: Effective Collaboration & Partnership Models.....	9
---	---

Roundtable: Engagement of non-English Speakers, Youth, and other Underrepresented CSC Members.....	10
---	----

Roundtable: Best Practices for Independent Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) for CAMPs and CERPs.....	10
---	----

Roundtable: Community Air Grants	11
--	----

Panel: AB 617 and Public Health.....	12
--------------------------------------	----

Roundtable: Budget & Funding: Transparency and Participatory Budgeting.....	13
---	----

Roundtable: Working with Local Governments	14
--	----

Roundtable: Charter Formation in Different CSC Governance Structures.....	15
---	----

Roundtable: Innovations in Green & Zero-Emission Technologies.....	16
--	----

Day 2 **17**

Opening Remarks.....17
Keynote Address: Looking Towards the Future.....17
Panel 1: Where Do We Go From Here?18
Roundtables: Innovations in CAMPs & CERPs.....19
Roundtables: Statewide / Regional Strategies for Implementing AB 617.....22
Panel: The People’s Blueprint23
Roundtables: Looking Towards the Future.....24
Final Reflection Panel26

Key Themes **28**

Community Steering Committees28
Air Districts29
CARB.....29

Looking Towards the Future **30**

Models for Future Dialogue31

Appendices31

Background on AB 617.....32



Introduction

The Past, Present, and Future of AB 617: Envisioning a Way Forward Together was a statewide virtual convening, held on September 27th and 29th of 2021, that brought together leaders involved in the implementation of Assembly Bill (AB) 617, California's bold experiment in community-based air quality monitoring and management. The convening was designed as a space for participants to share their own experiences and develop ideas for supporting the implementation of the policy. Learning about each other's perspectives, concerns, and visions is an important goal because of the diverse and often divergent perspectives on the policy by key stakeholders. It is also crucial to promote efforts to improve the implementation of this policy to address the needs of communities overburdened by air pollution and its health impacts in California.

The implementation of AB 617 has been a complex and at times controversial process with multiple stakeholders including the legislature that created the law, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) that oversees its statewide coordination, the regional Air Districts that are responsible for its implementation, and the Community Steering Committees (CSCs) made up of residents, local organizations, governments, and businesses which guide it, each with their own perspectives and goals. Despite many challenges, a number of innovations have supported the establishment of community-scale air quality monitoring, the development of potentially beneficial strategies to reduce air pollution emissions, and the facilitation of community-driven planning and decision-making processes¹.

The convening sought to highlight innovations and promote creative and collaborative thinking to develop new approaches to achieving the policy's goals. The title of the convening, Past, Present, and Future of AB 617: Envisioning a Way Forward Together signified this goal of collaboratively reflecting on the successes, challenges, and future visions for AB 617.

For reference, the components of the AB 617 implementation can be found in the Appendix².

Planning Process

This convening was built on the momentum created from the first AB 617 convening hosted in-person in February 2020 by UC Davis, which brought together nearly 80 participants from across the state, including CSC representatives from the 13 selected communities (as of 2020) and CARB officials in Year 2 of the policy's implementation. This day-long event featured panels consisting of CSC members, community advocates, CARB leaders, and air quality scientists from UC Davis. The event was valuable in providing CSC members from different communities the chance to learn with and from each other as well as to highlight differences and similarities between them. One specific outcome was identifying the difference in policies across various CSCs about paying CSC resident members stipends as well as the ability to meet outside of official CSC meetings. As a result, CARB and the Air Districts developed more consistent policies, including ensuring that all CSCs received compensation and that extra meetings were permitted. Please find the full report to the 2020 Convening [here](#).

The planning process for this 2021 virtual convening had several components (detailed below).

UC Davis served as the host of the event, coordinated planning with a team from CARB's Office of Community Air Protection (OCAP), produced a status report on AB 617 (London and Nguyen 2021), and provided policy guidance for the effort as a whole. The UC Davis team consisted of Dr. Jonathan London and Peter Nguyen.

A Community Planning Committee comprised of leaders from CSCs around the state provided foundational leadership and guided the format and content of the event. The members were:

- Ms. Margaret Gordon, West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project (WOEIP)
- Matt Holmes, Little Manila Rising
- Jesse Marquez, Coalition for a Safe Environment (CFASE)
- Nayamin Martinez, Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN)
- Christian Torres, Comité Civico Del Valle (Alternate: Luis Olmedo)

Harder+Company served as the convening design and facilitation consultant. The Harder+Company team facilitated the community planning committee meetings, co-designed the format of the event, developed the majority of the conference logistical materials, and facilitated the event sessions. The Harder+Company team was led by Dr. Amy Ramos and Mildred Ferrer and included support from Daniela Flores and Jessica Silva Villaneda.

CARB through its Office of Community Air Protection, led by Deldi Reyes, together with her staff (Michelle Byars, Brian Moore, and Karen Buckley) provided the funding for the event as well as crucial input on the program design and guest speakers.

Convening Programming

The program was held over 2 days (5-8pm on Monday, September 27th and Wednesday, September 29th). This two-day format was selected to reduce Zoom fatigue of an all-day event and to make it more possible for residents to attend after regular working hours. Short sessions (30 minutes) were designed to get as many of the priority topics by the Community Planning Committee included in the program. While this structure allowed for attention to these important issues it also, unfortunately, limited the depth of conversations in the sessions. The other major challenge of the logistics of the convening was the problems of using the web application platform (Attendify) which was unwieldy and eventually was bypassed for the second day in favor of an all Zoom platform that yielded improved engagement from participants.

Approximately 200 individuals participated in each day of the program. The breakdown of participants consisted of about 60% Air District and CARB staff and about 40% CSC members. The lower number of CSC members was unfortunate and likely a result of the difficulties in logging in on the first day of the event due to technical problems with the Attendify conference platform. Simultaneous Spanish translation was provided in all sessions and American Sign Language for the ASL-speaking participants.

The full program agenda can be found in the Appendix.

The program design and topics of the two days matched the title of the convening, with the first day focused on the past and present of AB 617, highlighting the successes, challenges, and lessons learned from the first 4 years of implementation and the second day devoted to envisioning a way forward. This structure was designed in the hopes that it would allow for both a critical and constructive lens on AB 617.

CONVENING SESSIONS

The session topics were developed by the Community Planning Committee and UC Davis with input from CARB. The convening sessions were comprised of keynote addresses, panels, and concurrent roundtables.

- The first type of sessions offered were keynote addresses that intended to set the tone for each day. The kick-off keynote address on the first day was given by Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia, one of the two co-authors of the original AB 617 legislation. The keynote address on the second day was by Liane M. Randolph, Chair of the California Air Resources Board.
- The second type of sessions was panels in which panelists responded to a set of questions by a moderator. These were attended by all convening participants.
- The third type of sessions was concurrent roundtables. Participants selected their choice of roundtables and each session had approximately 30-40 participants each. These were assisted by “resource people” whose role it was to contribute examples of the session topic and their own experiences to help catalyze the group conversation among the participants. These sessions also had facilitators from Harder+Company to manage the process.

Videos of the keynote addresses and panels can be accessed [here](#).



Day 1

INTRODUCTION / WELCOME REMARKS

Ms. Margaret Gordon, founding co-director of the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project (WOEIP) and a community co-lead of the West Oakland CSC provided the opening remarks. Ms. Margaret noted that while AB 617 was intended to be a “revolutionary change” it has still not resolved many of the challenges facing overburdened communities. She also urged the participants to “keep being humble, being kind and we also have to be brave.” These words served as a foundation for the dialogue in the event as a whole and many participants returned to them to remind each other of the intention and spirit of the convening.

PRESENTATION OF AB 617 SNAPSHOT REPORT

Dr. Jonathan London of UC Davis made a brief presentation of a Snapshot report based on an AB 617 Participants survey of 279 respondents including the Community Steering Committees (CSCs) in all 15 selected communities, the six Air Districts associated with these communities, CARB, other relevant state agencies, the AB 617 Consultation Group, Community Air Grant recipients, and members of the state legislature. The key findings echo the summary of stakeholder perceptions described above, with concerns by CSCs about the extent of their decision-making authorities, Air District’s describing challenges in meeting the requirements of the law, and CARB staff balancing their roles in supporting community voice and respecting the semi-autonomy of the Air Districts.

The full report can be found [here](#).

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY ASSEMBLYWOMAN CRISTINA GARCIA

Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia described her motivation in co-authoring AB 617 as rooted in her desire to address the systemic discrimination resulting in environmental injustices facing low-income communities and communities of color throughout California. One of her main intentions was to ensure that these communities had an empowered seat at the table in decisions affecting their health and well-being. She noted that this inclusion and empowerment has not been the case throughout environmental regulations in California, including the initial implementation of AB 617. As a result, she is seeking what she describes as a “culture change” in the regional and state agencies responsible for addressing environmental injustices.

Despite high expectations, she does not believe that the law has yet met its goals and that additional efforts by the Air Districts and CARB are needed to ensure its success. This is speaking particularly to the context of making the process community-driven and producing CERPs that have the promise of achieving significant, enforceable, and added-value improvements in air quality and health conditions in disadvantaged communities.

On the other hand, she noted that the law was not intended to solve all of the problems and provide all the funds needed for these actions, but instead as a “down payment” and a “catalyst” to ensure that CARB and the Air Districts meet their obligations to these disadvantaged communities. In light of the major investments the legislature is providing to implement the law, she does not see the solution to these issues as getting more funds unless these agencies show concrete results using the funds that they

have. She highlighted her expectation that emissions reductions should come from rules and regulations and not just incentives to industry and that the Air Districts need to commit to additional strategies and investments beyond their current activities and programs. She expects the Air Districts to bring other relevant agencies and governments to the table to implement the law. Furthermore, she called on CARB to promote the vision of AB 617 serving as a catalyst for “bigger action around the state for all of these communities that need work out there.” Towards this end, she emphasized the need for CARB to hold Air Districts accountable to their obligations to achieve substantive emissions and exposure reductions and for the CSCs to hold both sets of agencies, as well as the legislature, accountable to the communities who face these environmental injustices.

PANEL 1: ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES AND COLLABORATION

Moderator:

- Brian Moore (CARB)

Panelists:

- Todd Sax (CARB)
- Amy Miller (US EPA Region 9)
- William Jacques (San Diego Air Pollution Control District)

This panel was intended to lay out the range and relationships between the enforcement roles of local, state, and federal agencies. It was motivated in part by the observation from many CSC members that there is a lack of clarity about these roles and therefore difficulties in holding the agencies accountable in meeting their obligations. In particular, many CSC members and other environmental justice organizations want to see CARB use more of its authorities to compel stricter standards for enforcement activities and strategies conducted by the Air Districts.

One of the major themes of the panel was how AB 617 is requiring and prompting an improved collaboration between enforcement agencies. William Jacques observed that his San Diego Air District needs to “look beyond our historic role” and develop partnerships with the full range of AB 617 stakeholders, enhance their enforcement activities, and expand mobile source Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with CARB. Jacques described his Air District’s use of Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) to repair impacts on the affected communities and the dedicated enforcement focus on the provisions within the CERP. Todd Sax pointed to the CARB and CalEPA reporting systems where CARB posts the results of its enforcement actions. Sax described the environmental justice focus of CARB’s enforcement activities. For example, in the past year, CARB has inspected more than 13,000 vehicles and equipment and 73% of all those inspections were in disadvantaged communities. CARB is also encouraging violators the chance to invest in SEPs. This totaled \$6.8 million in 2020 and \$20 million over the past 4 years. Sax also described the increased collaboration with Air Districts on joint and coordinated enforcement activities, as well as with local district attorneys increasing CARB’s reach.

Amy Miller noted that AB 617 is encouraging collaborations between her federal agency and state agencies such as CARB, including issues such as tribal lands in the Coachella Valley and elsewhere across the South Coast Air Basin and the state as a whole. She shared that the new EPA Administrator, Michael Regan, has directed the agency to be more involved in environmental justice-oriented activities, including enforcement which has promoted greater engagement in AB 617. As an agency with oversight of many other agencies, Miller sees the US EPA as having a crucial role to play in bringing a wide variety of state and local agencies to the table.

In addition to these successes, all panelists agreed that they need to continue to improve their coordination and their transparency, especially in disadvantaged communities, about the results of their enforcement back to the public and to the local levels. Furthermore, improving the division of labor on mobile vs stationary sources will be important as well as finding ways to bring in agencies from outside the CalEPA and US EPA organizations, such as the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), city and county governments, and others with land use and transportation authorities that affect air quality but have been sufficiently integrated into the AB 617 process to date.

ROUNDTABLE: EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP MODELS

Resource People:

- Ms. Margaret Gordon (West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project)
- Richard Grow (West Oakland CSC)

This session focused on the process and the value of creating partnership agreements as the foundation for building equitable and effective collaborations within and between communities and agencies. Both Ms. Margaret and Richard Grow were leaders in the development of the West Oakland partnership agreements between WOEIP, US EPA, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), and other agencies. In their dialogue, they raised several key points.

The first point is the importance of investing time in such partnership agreements to build mutual understanding and trust between agencies and communities. This will require a slower process to initiate the partnership, but this will result in major benefits along the way in reducing the likelihood of time-intensive conflicts. Second and related to the first, is to develop ways to resolve conflicts in a mutually acceptable way that leaves all parties feeling respected in as close to a consensus as possible (that there are no absolute or permanent winners or losers). These conflict resolution methods should be formalized and included in an agreement of collaboration. These agreements should provide the foundation for the CSC charters but expand beyond these charters to address longer-term relationships that extend into other planning processes.

Third, developing formal written agreements about the values, vision, and decision-making processes are crucial. These can be referred back to in times of conflict as well as to set priorities when faced with competing proposals and opportunities. Fourth, these partnerships need to explicitly and pro-actively call out and work to respond to structural racism. Fifth, these partnerships need to ensure that the language used in the interactions is accessible to all. On that note, in response to a question about agency-community interactions, Ms. Margaret stated, “It’s not about dumbing it down, it’s about being articulate. We push that onto the scientists, the engineers, and other people involved.” Both Ms. Margaret and Richard emphasized that it was this existing set of collaboration agreements and the trusting relationships--developed years before the launch of AB 617 that allowed the West Oakland CSC to achieve its successes to date. They recommend that the other CSCs that do not have such collaboration agreements and the time to create them to engage in establishing these agreements, even if it appears to slow down the process in the short term.

ROUNDTABLE: ENGAGEMENT OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS, YOUTH, AND OTHER UNDERREPRESENTED CSC MEMBERS

Resource Persons:

- Nayamin Martinez (Central California Environmental Justice Network)
- Lilia Becerril (Fresno CSC)
- Estela Ortega (Fresno CSC)
- Anabel Marquez (Shafter CSC)
- Bryana Gastelum (Richmond CSC)

This roundtable session sought to highlight the challenges and opportunities for effective engagement of those typically marginalized from planning processes such as AB 617 due to language access, adultism, barriers to disability inclusion, and unwelcoming institutional environments. Key barriers noted included meetings held at inaccessible times for people working other jobs or attending school during regular business hours. CSC meetings have been shifted to late afternoon/early evenings, but Air District Board meetings tend to be during the day, making these meetings inaccessible to many community members. While there has been some progress, Air Districts, CARB, and other agency presentations still tend to be conducted in overly technical language or as one participant described it as “academic language used by the ivory tower” that has deterred community participation.

Several participants observed a lack of sufficient cultural competency by Air Districts and to some extent, CARB, and the need for improved training. This training can include capacities on working respectfully with communities of color and low-income communities, approaches to identifying and addressing patterns of systemic racism in the communities and the agencies themselves, and methods of working with communities in more democratic manners. Ensuring that all CSC materials are provided in appropriate languages with the same lead time as the English versions were deemed crucial for making non-English speakers feel valued, heard, and respected. Participants’ recommendations to improve community engagement included creating glossaries of key terms related to AB 617 such as CAMPs and CERPs, posting positive models of community engagement processes online for other CSCs to draw from and adapt (perhaps in a centralized location such as CARB’s website), using some of the innovations in CSC community engagement to use in meetings with other public agencies such as city councils, and publishing materials in multiple languages with sufficient timing to allow for full access and review.

ROUNDTABLE: BEST PRACTICES FOR INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUPS (TAGS) FOR CAMPS AND CERPS

Resource Persons:

- Matt Holmes (Little Manila Rising)
- Jesse Marquez (Communities for a Safe Environment)
- Jill Johnston (University of Southern California)
- Andrea Polidori (South Coast Air Pollution Control District)
- Naama Raz-Yaseef (Richmond CSC)
- Chandan Misra (CARB)

Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) have been developed in several AB 617 communities to provide an independent source of technical information beyond that of the Air Districts and CARB. These have been created in some cases where the CSCs are not satisfied with the completeness or accessibility of the information from the public agencies to enable them to make informed decisions. As one participant

who advocated for the creation of a TAG in her community described, “the purpose of a TAG is for the community to be empowered.” The membership of the TAGs is important, and she noted that “if the TAG experts talk over the community, then you didn’t choose the right people.” She also urged those interested in developing TAGs to ensure that they have adequate funding to allow for continuity so as not to lose momentum or to be able to provide services to the CSC at the appropriate times.

In some cases, TAGs can work with the community co-lead in a “train the trainer” model so these community leaders can communicate this information to the rest of the CSC members. In some cases, the development of TAGs has been controversial, with some Air Districts resisting them. On the other hand, several participants observed that many CSC members also have the significant technical expertise and should have their knowledge respected. One participant posed the question as, “How do we blend the expertise of residents and agencies into a community-led process?” Participants with TAGs associated with their CSCs urged the Air Districts and CARB to support the development of these groups in other AB 617 communities, including experts in public health, land use, and other CERP-related issues.

ROUNDTABLE: COMMUNITY AIR GRANTS

Resource Persons:

- Christian Torres (Comite Civico del Valley)
- Martha Dina Arguello (Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles)
- Rey Leon (San Joaquin Valley Latino Environmental Advancement & Policy/Mayor of Huron)
- Adrian Rehn (Valley Vision)

This session explored the role of CARB’s Community Air Grants (CAG) which have been used to both support community organizations to build capacity that can enable them to support a successful application to become an AB 617 community and to enhance their engagement in existing AB 617 communities. One participant whose organization has a CAG noted, “community air grants are an under-appreciated bright little brother of the AB 617 program.” Similarly, one stated, “We think about Air Grants as ‘pre-work’ and capacity-building for formal AB 617 designation, but it can also supplement formal CSC work.”

A number of participants recommended that CARB increase the funding and selection of the CAGs to allow for more significant work, especially in communities that lack the resources compared to the larger communities. Others urged CARB to prioritize grants that address structural racism as well as those that focus on public health. In several communities, including the Eastern Coachella Valley, Avenal, and Sacramento, local organizations have developed or enhanced local air monitoring networks. These networks can provide data that feeds into the development of CAMPs as well as provide residents with information to support their understanding of the air conditions in their community and as a way of self-empowerment and advocacy. There is sometimes a gap, however, between this community-driven data collection and integration into the Air District’s air monitoring data systems. Developing ways to use these data to complement the Air District and CARB’s data will be an important next step.

PANEL: AB 617 AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Moderator:

- Dr. Venise Curry (Fresno CSC)

Panelists:

- John Balmes (UC San Francisco, UC Berkeley, CARB)
- Rachel Morello-Frosch (UC Berkeley)
- Anna Lee (Bay Area Air Quality Management District)

This panel was intended to draw out the current and potential future connections between AB 617 and public health. This has been a controversial issue with many CSC members seeking greater attention to public health in the form of integrating health disparities data into the CAMPs, developing CAMP strategies that explicitly focus on health improvements and outcomes, and developing health metrics to assess the efficacy of these measures. Many CSC members and other health and environmental justice advocates critique the CERPs for being focused on emissions reduction more than exposure reduction and even less so on improvements to public health, especially for the most disadvantaged communities.

Dr. John Balmes acknowledged that at a CARB Board meeting early on in the AB 617 process there was opposition from the Air Districts to include health metrics in the CAMPs and CERPs (due to cost and methodological complexity). He affirmed that there needs to be more emphasis on public health in AB 617. This would include a focus on tracking health outcomes that result from AB 617 actions in the CERPs, an effort that must include CARB, the Air Districts as well as public health agencies. It would also include CARB creating a standard baseline of health metrics that it would require Air Districts to use for tracking health impacts.

All three of the panelists described the problem as being the lack of appropriate data for drawing causative conclusions about the impacts of the CERP actions. There is also a need for close to real-time data instead of the typical two to three-year lag for most health data. Rachel Morello-Frosch noted that although California is a data-rich state some key indicators such as birth outcomes, low birth-weight babies, asthma, and other health effects are hard to come by at the finer scale of the AB 617 communities. However, she gave an example of her study about the health impacts of the operations and closures of power plants. In this case, they were able to demonstrate specific health improvements related to the power plant closure³.

A similar methodology could be used to track CERP measures under AB 617 to identify public health condition “signals” associated with emissions reductions promoted by the CERP strategies. Panelists agreed that it will be crucial to develop standardized health metric reporting processes. Another point of agreement was the need for more long-term longitudinal studies tracking changes in health conditions and connecting these to actions by the Air Districts and other agencies in implementing the CERPs over time.

Building improved collaborative relationships with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) would be one useful strategy to bolster capacity on public health. In the Zoom session chat, one participant called on CARB to secure the engagement of the health care and insurance companies to provide their more granular data and to request from CDPH to release more of their fine-scale data (often at the street address-level). Working with county departments of public health would also be important as they have a more localized perspective and often have close working relationships with local government agencies involved in land use policy and planning.

One participant suggested creating a “super team” or Technical Advisory Group of health experts (epidemiologists, exposure scientists, biostatisticians) that could provide consultation to CARB, the Air Districts, and the CSCs on developing health studies for each AB 617 community and the state-wide effort as a whole. Another participant requested that any effort to track health outcomes should focus on racial disparities because of the dire situation facing African Americans in the state and the limited number of AB 617 communities located in predominantly African American areas. This is important to address the historical legacies of racism in land use zoning, redlining, and housing patterns that created these neighborhood-based health disparities. Incorporating this historical approach to understanding the production of present-day environmental and racialized injustices was strongly endorsed by all of the other panelists and the moderator. Rachel Morello-Frosch provided the term “reparative” to refer to proactively addressing historical injustices. She posed provocative questions that can serve as the basis for future dialogues between all parties: What would a reparations-oriented approach to AB 617 look like? How would it help set priorities for the CERPs to address racial disparities?

ROUNDTABLE: BUDGET & FUNDING: TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Resource Persons:

- Luis Olmedo (Comité Civico del Valle)
- Kelly Trainor Gamino (South Coast Air Quality Management District)
- Chris Chavez (South Los Angeles CSC)

This session was developed in direct response to CSC calls for greater control of budgeting and funding allocations by CSCs relative to the current power of the Air Districts in these decisions. Many CSC members seek a system in which pools of funds provided by CARB to the Air Districts will be re-delegated to the CSCs to set priorities and allocate the necessary resources to support them. This framework is called participatory budgeting and has been used across the United States and around the world as a form of grassroots democracy in which the people most affected by a policy, plan, or problem play the lead role in determining and deciding how funds are spent to implement the policy or plan to address the problem.

The roundtable discussion raised a number of these issues, with many participants describing the need for more transparency in the ways that the Air Districts report out their decision-making and budget allocations as well as a more participatory process for the CSC to make their own decisions about how to prioritize the expenditures. Chris Chavez highlighted the importance of having CSC members generate their own list of priorities instead of only having the Air District develop the list for CSC members’ voting. Without this information and authority, some of the participants reported feeling disempowered, a lack of agency, and without a clear mechanism to ensure that the CERPs are truly meeting their needs and visions.

Some of the key issues raised in the roundtable were developing voting processes that are fair, transparent, and allow for decisions that all members of the CSC feel comfortable with. The question of whether these voting processes would be majority rule, consensus, some form of modified consensus (such as the five-fingered consensus), and/or a mix of consensus and voting if consensus cannot be reached must be resolved for a successful process⁴. Other issues relate to how CSC participation aligns with the roles of the Air Districts. Some participants noted that if the districts follow the “letter of the law” they would develop the CERPs in consultation with the CSC: however, if they follow the “spirit” of this law as community-based and driven, it would be the CSC that decides CERP budget allocations in consultation with the Air Districts. In this case, the Air District consultation role would be providing technical support to translate the CSC priorities into actionable strategies. This is a fundamental difference that is currently

being managed differently in the six Air Districts with AB 617 communities. For example in West Oakland, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District largely adopted the plan (Owning Our Air) as produced by the CSC.

ROUNDTABLE: WORKING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Resource Persons:

- Ms. Margaret Gordon (West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project)
- Kevin Krewson (Caltrans)
- Jessica Olsen (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District)

This roundtable was developed to respond to the challenges and opportunities of AB 617 including policy and planning issues that expand beyond the topical jurisdictions of the typical implementing partners of the Air Districts and CARB. Based on the strategies included in many CERPs, the implementation must include entities such as cities and counties (especially in the crucial area of land use), transportation districts and agencies, school districts, pesticide regulators (at the county and state levels), ports, and others. This is a challenge because many of these entities do not have experience collaborating with each other and with the Air Districts and CARB, the Air Districts and CARB often lack the authority to compel their action, and because they often do not have additional funding or authorities related to AB 617. Nonetheless, since their jurisdictions do align and are critical in implementing the CERP strategies, CSCs look to these entities to fully participate in AB 617 and for the Air Districts to develop collaborative relationships with them. Without the collaboration of this network of agencies, the deeper structures that produce environmental injustice cannot be resolved (for example the legacies of redlining and racist land use, housing and transportation policies, and city and county plans).

A number of important issues were raised on these themes from this roundtable. First is the difficulty of what Ms. Margaret called "connecting the dots" between different agencies responsible for improving air quality in disadvantaged communities. She noted that it took twenty years to connect the dots with the City of Oakland and its land use and transportation authorities together with Caltrans and CARB. She credited current Mayor Libby Schaaf with leveraging her municipal leadership to make this happen. The fact that the City of Oakland has a progressive stance towards issues of social, racial, and environmental justice has greatly enhanced the process of aligning its work with AB 617. This example could serve as a useful case study for future enhancements to collaborations between cities, Air Districts, and CSCs.

This is not the case in many of the other jurisdictions involved in AB 617 where cities and counties resist their engagement. In the San Joaquin Valley, for example, an MOU between the Air District and the City of Fresno, requested early on by the CSC, has taken years to materialize and is still in its early developing process. According to Jessica Olsen from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJV APCD), the city has maintained that it had limited roles because it was not provided any additional authorities or funding under AB 617. Conversely, the Air District was not provided any authority to compel the participation of the City of Fresno or any other city or county in the San Joaquin Valley. Therefore, voluntary efforts and improved communication between these entities are needed. The CSC has also brought its own areas of expertise and social capital from working on land use, transportation, and housing issues in the region as a resource for the implementation process.

Fresno has been the site of positive collaborations with one of the school districts in the case of the installation of school-site air filtration systems and has required directly going to the school board and not relying solely on district staff leaders. One case in the Valley that was only briefly mentioned is that

of the challenge of implementing one of the major strategies in the Shafter CERP, a provision for local pesticide notification. Because the Kern County Agricultural Commissioner has firmly refused to comply, and the state Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) has been unable to compel the county, the CERP process on this item has grounded to a halt and the CSC is now looking to the legislature to pass a statewide pesticide notification bill.

Kevin Krewson from Caltrans noted that his agency was not granted any additional authorities or funding under AB 617 making their engagement difficult and slow. However, the state-level leadership is supportive and is seeking to repurpose other funds to work on AB 617-related planning. It is these kinds of creative workarounds as well as collaborative structures like MOUs that will allow AB 617 to achieve the kind of multi-agency and multi-level collaboration needed.

ROUNDTABLE: CHARTER FORMATION IN DIFFERENT CSC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Resource Persons:

- Mary Valdemar (San Bernardino Valley College)
- Ivanka Saunders (Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability)
- Paula Torrado (Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles)

This session was motivated by the importance of the charter formation process and the eventual charters developed in each of the CSCs as well as the level of both conflict and collaboration that these processes provoked. CSC leaders from central and southern California drew upon their own expertise in sharing their experiences. Overall, participants highlighted the importance of charters in being explicit about the values of the committee, its agreements on how to treat each other, how decisions would be made, and how conflicts would be resolved. Several speakers emphasized the importance of the charters as “setting a tone” for the primacy of community voice and power as the foundation of the CSCs. Participants noted that it is important that charters have explicit statements about the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of each CSC member and how the CSC operates in the context of the Air Districts. Some charters do not include this latter issue and focus primarily on the internal workings of the CSC. Ivanka Saunders from the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (LCJA) noted that decision-making rules are an important part of the charters as they can “help push the priorities of the community members.” Likewise, Ivanka noted that the charters “are important to fall back on when you get into these tougher situations.” This is particularly important since all CSCs have experienced patterns of conflicts among their members and between the committees and the Air Districts. Creating guidelines for controversial issues such as the involvement of industry members on CSCs requires clear agreements and disclosure of conflicts of interests in the charters.

Some charters prescribe conventional systems such as Robert’s Rules of Order and others manage themselves under the Brown Act that regulates local decision-making bodies such as city councils. Paula Torrado from Physicians for Social Responsibility - LA (PSR-LA) described using participatory techniques such as an online “Jamboard” that allows participants to post ideas, suggestions, and comments on pending decisions. Mary Valdemar related her experiences in the San Bernardino/Muscoy CSC in using the charter to influence agencies inside and outside the CSC to make their decisions transparent. She also described their approaches to making sure community voices are heard in prominent roles (such as “progressive stack” in which community representatives are placed first in a segmented speaker order followed by agency and business members). All members noted that designing a charter to be both robust to deal with difficult issues and flexible enough to be adapted over time as needed. One promising

practice would be to have the charters include both internal leadership and management of the CSCs as well as their relationships with the Air Districts and CARB to ensure that CSC decisions have appropriate levels of authority in the overall AB 617 process.

ROUNDTABLE: INNOVATIONS IN GREEN & ZERO-EMISSION TECHNOLOGIES

Resource Persons:

- Jesse Marquez (Coalition for a Safe Environment)
- Salvador Vargas (retired, San Joaquin Delta College)
- Sandra Berg (Vice Chair of the CARB Board)
- Ed Ward (Valley Pacific Petroleum Services)
- Cassie Loping (CARB)

This session aligned with the goals of the event to highlight constructive and innovative approaches to addressing the air quality disparities in disadvantaged communities. The promotion of green technologies is one important strategy to achieve this. Jesse Marquez set the tone for the session by encouraging the participants to complement their protesting and demonstrating with developing practical alternatives and solutions to the air quality problems and being willing to negotiate to implement these solutions. A central part of these solutions is the development and implementation of green technologies, including the electrification of trucks and industrial vehicles (e.g., for loading and unloading at ports). To bring these technologies to scale, Jesse Marquez remarked that it be important to dispel the myths about their limited capacity and to highlight their potential, including the role of electrified trucks for short-haul uses. Other key technologies include green hydrogen fuel cell power that can replace any type of battery and vapor recovery technology. Sandra Berg, Vice Chair of the CARB Board, emphasized the need for such green technologies to help the state meet its low-carbon fuel standard and its new carbon neutrality initiatives. This crossover between AB 617 and some of the state's other major climate change mitigation programs will be an important way to integrate AB 617 into larger policy frameworks.

Ed Ward cautioned that some zero-emissions technologies may have longer lead times such as a complete phase-out of diesel trucks and the strategies needed now to achieve short-term emissions reduction goals must rely on intermediate technologies. He pointed to renewable diesel sources/biodiesel, lower-carbon fuel mixtures, and methane capture (from landfills). Ward also emphasized the need to improve vocational education to get the new generation involved in the green technology sector, starting with vocational education in high schools and community colleges. This was strongly endorsed by Sal Vargas, who noted that this could have the dual benefits of career development as well as educational improvements in the K-12 system. Sal Vargas noted that many students in the Delta Community College in the Stockton area do not have the reading, writing, and math skills needed for entry into and success within the green technology sector and that this gap must be filled primarily at the K-12 level as well as in the community colleges themselves. Sal mentioned one small but useful benefit of having a free toolbox for graduates of green technology programs in community colleges. Cassie Lopina encouraged participants to work closely with Air Districts as well as with manufacturers to identify and vet new technologies to find systems that can effectively and feasibly meet local clean air goals.

Day 2

OPENING REMARKS: NAYAMIN MARTINEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NETWORK

Nayamin Martinez offered opening remarks to kick-off the second day. She noted that while there were technical difficulties on the first day, that these are nothing compared to the problems facing the overburdened communities and that our commitment to improved air quality is stronger than any of these problems. She recalled Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia's comments that AB 617 was not intended to solve all air quality issues and that its gaps represent major challenges for the policy's stakeholders. She appreciated that CARB and the Air Districts are on a journey through new approaches to community-driven processes. She also recognized that the CERPs require collaboration with multiple local, regional, and state agencies far beyond the traditional jurisdictions of the Air Districts. For communities, typically marginalized groups like youth and non-English speakers face special challenges in participation. Reflecting on her own challenging journey as an immigrant, woman, non-native English speaker, she affirmed that she does not consider herself a "minority" but instead part of a strong, unified community. She called out instances of success such as in Imperial County with its participatory budgeting process and West Oakland's deep community engagement history and collaborative partnership with the Bay Area air district.

Looking forward to the day's program, she called on everyone to move beyond recounting the past and present successes and failures of the policy implementation process and instead think about the future: what do we need to do together to reach our goals? What kind of future do we want to see for our communities, for our children and grandchildren? Finally, she encouraged everyone to recall Ms. Margaret Gordon's call to the participants to be humble, kind, and brave.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE LIANE M. RANDOLPH, CARB BOARD CHAIR

CARB Board Chair Liane M. Randolph set the forward-looking tone for the day by recognizing the ambitiousness of AB 617's goal to reduce health disparities related to air quality in the state's most impacted communities by fundamentally shifting how multiple levels of government can work together to address these problems. She observed that the COVID pandemic has made the program more challenging, but increased people's commitment to its success. As CARB Board Chair, AB 617 is one of her top priorities and she sees its focus on equity, starting with racial and health equity as a crucial part of change throughout the agency. She noted with appreciation that the 2020 AB 617 statewide community convening prompted several changes in CARB's policies, including clarifying that implementation funds may be used for CSC resident stipends (this had not been standard practice across the Air Districts) and the push to create a new and improved AB 617 Blueprint (now underway in the People's Blueprint).

She highlighted key learnings from the first day's program. This included the need to improve the integration of public health into the core of AB 617 through the use of health metrics to assess success and to guide CERP development and implementation processes. Ensuring that Air Districts have adequate funding is another important priority as is increased transparency and accountability in the use of these funds. She affirmed the focus on participatory budgeting as a best practice for all Air Districts and committed CARB

to a shared learning process to develop this approach throughout the state. Increasing the technical assistance to CSCs to better inform their decision-making, sustain community engagement, especially with traditionally marginalized populations, and ensure enforcement is more coordinated across agencies are all top priorities. She further echoed a theme from the first day about the need for CARB and the Air Districts to spread the benefits of AB 617 beyond the designated communities to the many others who need support and protection from environmental issues.

Chair Randolph observed that similar to this convening, AB 617 is intended to bring diverse stakeholders together to address structural problems that are the result of a long history of racist land use policies and decisions and that it is CARB's commitment to provide the funding and support to make this a success. She connected this to the book *Hella Town Oakland's History of Development and Disruption* by Mitchell Schwarzer about the racial dimensions of land use and urban development in Oakland as a reminder of why we are all doing this work and how community-focused efforts need to lead the way.

PANEL 1: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Moderator:

- Martha Dina Arguello (Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles)

Panelists:

- Chanell Fletcher (CARB)
- Veronica Eady (Bay Area Air Quality Management District)
- Davina Hurt (CARB Board)
- Christian Torres (Comité Civico del Valle)
- Wayne Natri (South Coast Air Quality Management District)

The focus of this discussion was to reflect on how AB 617 implementation can be improved to better meet the goals of the legislation and the diverse array of stakeholders.

Key themes that emerged during the panel include the importance of strengthening and in some cases rebuilding trust between communities and public agencies, the importance of cross-collaboration between different agencies, a need for more transparency in budgeting, ensuring enforcement methods of the AB 617 Blueprint framework, and opening more space in the process for community leadership and power. Martha Dina Arguello asked the panelists four key questions: What would you fix? What would you do more of? What would you do less of? What would you do differently? Veronica Eady emphasized that each community is unique and different, and enabling an agency to respond to these unique needs cannot be done instantaneously, as “changing culture at a public agency is like changing the direction of a ship, it takes time.” Ms. Eady also stated her appreciation for Ms. Margaret Gordon's emphasis on the need for training staff on environmental justice, structural racism, collaboration, and participatory budgeting.

Wayne Natri and Veronica Eady both characterized the AB 617 implementation timeline as challenging and an obstacle in their abilities to build a truly collaborative process. District staff and leadership feel themselves in a race against time to both meet the requirements of the law and to respond to urgent community needs and priorities. Mr. Natri also called for more resources to fund community engagement activities as well as exploring strategies to compel the participation of other relevant governments and agencies to participate and support the CAMPs and CERPs development, funding, and implementation.

Chanell Fletcher supported having more frequent exchanges across the CSCs to share promising models about power-sharing between agencies and communities. She also expressed excitement about how

the enforcement processes of both CARB and the Air Districts can contribute to greater protection for overburdened communities. Davina Hurt emphasized the need for CARB and the Air Districts to develop innovative ways to spread the benefits of the AB 617 approach to other communities that also need similar support. She also echoed many on the panel and in the whole event on the need for power-sharing between agencies and the communities as well as greater accountability and transparency.

One theme that emerged from the panelists and in the audience questions and discussion is the role that current agency staff plays in acknowledging the negative impacts of their past actions. There was a divergence between some panelists, such as Wayne Nastri, and comments in the chat about how the Air District's current staff "are not the people who have perpetrated racism in the past," and thus are unfairly treated as the perpetrators. Mr. Nastri noted that this criticism of Air District staff, despite their significant efforts to be of service to the community, has had negative impacts on staff morale. Some audience members responded by pointing out that it is important for all agencies to take responsibility for addressing the historical legacies of what each agency has done in the past, even if they were not the actual people who committed these acts. Charles Reed from the West Oakland CSC stated, "there are pathways to earning trust and owning the past is paramount to earning it."

Christian Torres agreed with this approach to agencies taking responsibility and accountability. He noted that one way to address these legacies is to support community power in AB 617 implementation through measures such as participatory budgeting that place authority over their communities in their own hands. This can be seen as echoing Rachel Morello-Frosch's invoking of a reparations-based approach. Participants in chat echoed this point stating there is a need for "open dialogue between CSC community members where agencies & government folk just listen" and "letting [them] share best practices without [government agencies] directing the conversation."

ROUNDTABLES: INNOVATIONS IN CAMPS & CERPS

Innovations in CAMPs

Resource Persons:

- Matt Holmes (Little Manila Rising)
- Lee Ann Hill (Physicians, Scientists, and Engineers for Healthy Energy)
- Boris Lukanov (Physicians, Scientists, and Engineers for Healthy Energy)
- Kate Hoag (Bay Area Air Quality Management District)

This roundtable was dedicated to the subjects of CAMP implementation. Key themes included perceptions of inadequate funding allocations, the ambitious AB 617 timeline, the time-intensive nature of air quality data collection, and the mismatch of this timeline with that of the CERP development. In many cases, the timeline prevented CAMP data from being used in the development of the CERPs. Kate Hoag launched the conversation by sharing how she first saw AB 617 as an exciting opportunity from an air monitoring perspective because it was the first time she was allowed the flexibility as an agency representative to build and design programs around community perspectives and priorities.

Other resource people agreed that the sharing of information is essential to maximize the effectiveness of CAMPs and CERPs. Lee Ann Hill said, "Data collection and assessing community needs takes time! Folks want to move towards action, so information sharing and process needs to be centered through to that." Matt Holmes echoed the importance of information sharing from agencies, stating, "CARB is also in the room, and they don't volunteer information unless you demand it from them. Once you do, you will get amazing information. Drag CARB into the arena!" Hill discussed her experience with the Richmond/San

Pablo CSC and how communication with community members was central to identifying their priorities. This process was challenging because it took place early in the AB 617 process, so funding allocations and data quality verification processes were not clearly defined. Resource people and audience members all noted the importance of setting up systems to collect, analyze, validate and communicate high-quality air monitoring data to the community and public.

The discussion concluded with Herman Barahona, an EJ advocate from Sacramento, and San Diego Air District supervisor David Sodeman engaging in dialogue regarding low-cost monitors. Based on their initial conversation, they decided to connect with each other afterward since they were having a productive conversation. This was a good example of the relationships being fostered at the convening.

Innovations in CERPs

Resource Persons:

- Jesse Marquez (Coalition for a Safe Environment)
- Ian MacMillan (South Coast Air Quality Management District)

“Do not reinvent the wheel” repeated Jesse Marquez during this roundtable’s assessment of innovation in CERPs. Marquez described his CSC’s and own work in the AB 617 communities of Wilmington/West Long Beach/Carson which has brought forth many innovations in the CERP development strategy that can be adapted by other CSCs. These included a truck routing study, the development of health metrics, and a health assessment methodology (including secondary health statistics and health surveys). Marquez described a process through which the CSC came together to pressure the South Coast AQMD to support these measures while Ian MacMillan countered that the District was supportive of these measures. This difference in perception suggests the value of these kinds of dialogues.

Marquez noted that CSCs are encouraged to apply for CARB’s AB 617 Community Air Grants as well as other state and federal grants like those provided through CARB’s Supplemental Environmental Project or Center for Disease Control CASPR programs⁵. Marquez pointed out that residents can also take advantage of local funding, like those provided at the discretion of elected officials at the city and county levels.

The discussion also centered around shifting focus from solely regional air quality to local impacts. Ian MacMillan described the South Coast AQMD’s increased emphasis on these local impacts and ensured that the District’s existing regional programs had a locally-focused rule-making component. However, as highlighted by Linda Cleveland, a Co-Lead from the South Los Angeles CSC, time constraints make it difficult for residents to come to the table. She and other participants described AB 617 process as not sufficiently accessible, with the imposed deadlines for CERP development limiting the time available for stakeholders to educate each other and create an understanding of others’ experiences and circumstances.

Without this planning time for relationship development, participants noted that it is crucial to rely on existing local knowledge, experiences, partnerships, and networks to develop and implement the CERP. Residents were encouraged to use personal experiences and knowledge to inform CERP priorities. CSCs can look to community organizations and EJ groups for additional learning, guidance, and resources during the CERP process. Additionally, CSC members can reference existing CERPs from other CSCs to develop their own.

The work done through AB 617 in each selected community should not be done in isolation. CSCs can learn from the past and from each other. Marquez’s message to not “reinvent the wheel” not only serves

as guidance for other CSCs engaging in the CERP process but as a mission statement for this year's convening as a whole. Participants affirmed that the purpose of this convening is to share insights from the AB 617 implementation process across communities, to build off of the previous struggles and triumphs of those who have put in the work to reduce emissions and alleviate health burdens, even before AB 617 came into existence. Environmental justice work has been championed by residents of California's communities long before AB 617, and it is up to those currently engaged in the AB 617 process to look towards those experts for a way forward.

Innovations in CERPs

Resource Persons:

- Nayamin Martinez (Central California Environmental Justice Coalition)
- Ms. Margaret Gordon (West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project)
- Jessica Olsen (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District)

This roundtable focused on the creative and productive approaches to developing CERPs adopted by the CSCs across the state. In particular, this roundtable highlighted the importance of having strong partnerships in both the creation and implementation of the CERPs. All three resource people stressed how paramount it is to not only include, but also shift greater responsibility and leadership to the community. Nayamin Martinez noted that adopting this strategy transforms the “business-as-usual” approach and can create tension when faced with CERP strategies that push the agencies outside their typical practices and procedures.

In particular, Martinez brought up the decision in the Fresno CERP to provide \$1 million for planting urban street trees as well as a measure on vegetative barriers as pollution mitigation strategies with many other social, health, and environmental benefits. In this case, despite some initial opposition to providing this amount of funding from the Air District staff and Board, Nayamin stated, “I am proud that our committee was bold enough to stand by [these] decisions.” She also noted that these strategies would allow residents to feel safe and protected in their homes and neighborhoods. One participant, Catherine Garoua White, the Executive Director of the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition, supports these strategies by commenting in chat, [There is] plenty of research backing vegetative barriers as protections for multiple issues like air pollution, heat.” Jessica Olsen expressed support for these measures and as reflecting community priorities, stating that in these instances “They will really be driving the process.”

Innovations in CERPs

Resource Persons:

- Gustavo Aguirre Jr. (Central California Environmental Justice Network)
- Ed Ward (Valley Pacific Petroleum Services)

This roundtable focused on AB 617 processes in the San Joaquin Valley with an emphasis on emissions reduction measures on regional sources. Like many of the other sessions, this one also highlighted the need for decision-making to be centered in the CSCs and draw from the lived experiences of the residents who confront the pollution burdens every day. Gustavo Aguirre Jr. stated that it was important to have residents define the high-priority areas for integration into the CERPs. In Kern County, there needs to be an emphasis on impacts from oil and gas exploration, refining, and transportation. Linking AB 617 to campaigns on setbacks of oil and gas facilities from homes and schools is one opportunity for increasing the benefits of AB 617 to disadvantaged communities. Likewise, community efforts to develop pesticide

notification policies at the county level were a big win in their inclusion in the CERP but implementation has been stalled based on opposition from Kern County governments, particularly from the County Ag Commissioner. Other potential emissions reduction measures with community support are electrification of agricultural and other off-road equipment as well as residential solar and electric automobiles and lawnmowers.

Some participants called out the challenge of integrating AB 617's emphasis on stationary and area-wide sources (the traditional jurisdiction of Air Districts) and mobile sources which are under CARB's purview. Ed Ward emphasized the potential for green technology mechanical education for local residents as a way to promote these technologies and create an economic development/professional pipeline for the economic well-being of the region and residents. Heather Heinks, a San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District staff, emphasized the importance of community partnerships with people like Gustavo Aguirre Jr. and organizations such as Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN) and Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (LCJA) as liaisons with the residents and broader communities.

ROUNDTABLE: STATEWIDE / REGIONAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING AB 617

Resource Persons:

- Heather Arias (CARB)
- Greg Nudd (Bay Area Air Quality Management District)
- Veronica Eady (Bay Area Air Quality Management District)
- Laura Cackette (Bay Area Air Quality Management District)
- Davina Hurt (CARB Board)

This roundtable discussion was centered on developments and strategies for improved statewide and regional implementation of AB 617 from CARB and Air District representatives beyond the 15 selected communities. Major issues included how to infuse the approaches of community engagement into other CARB and Air District programs as well as how to use the non-community scale programs of AB 617 to achieve its goals of reducing air pollution burdens and promoting public health in disadvantaged communities.

The principal method for this Air District-wide scale action is the implementation of the expedited best available retrofit control technology (BARCT) which is intended to reduce emissions from specific industrial facilities. Currently, there are 44 BARCT sites across the six Air Districts involved with AB 617 communities. Participants encouraged better alignment with the BARCT strategies and the community-specific CERPs. This potential alignment is an untapped opportunity⁶.

Air District comments, primarily from BAAQMD, emphasized the need to use BARCT to meet the environmental justice goals of AB 617. One staff member, Azibuike Akaba (BAAQMD), stated that Air Districts should distribute resources to support other agencies who are not getting resources from the state to participate in AB 617. In addition to moving out of regional silos to fostering cross-agency support, Air District representatives raised the need to improve and incorporate more environmental justice and equity within air district regional rulemaking strategies. They noted that changes implemented by the Air Districts will not lead to the outcomes that local communities have been calling for unless they incorporate community-driven practices and equity within their decision-making authority such as through rulemaking.

CARB staff and CARB Board members built upon this theme of equity, by asking questions such as from

CARB Board member Davina Hurt about how agencies can start to incorporate equity by first establishing a baseline of air quality and public health. Another CARB Board member, Tania Pacheco-Werner, asked for clarification of state agencies' roles. She noted that there is a need for more communication between state agencies to clarify authorities and roles that each agency can play in supporting local communities, especially rural communities whose decision-making is located at the County Board of Supervisors level.

CSC members were very engaged in this discussion raising key issues and questions that advocates and residents have been voicing since the start of AB 617, which address the need for structural changes, how CSC meetings are conducted, cross-agency and government collaboration, incorporating equity and training within agency practices, and how AB 617 must be community-driven in going back to its core principles. In addressing structural changes, Kevin Hamilton, a community advocate, called for increased communication statewide between all agencies, local air districts, and local governments. There is a good amount of cross-pollination and cross-agency work, but how can the work be organized, connected, engaged, and intentional in a way where all these entities are talking and working together? Key to this engagement is the need for agencies to incorporate equity in their own practices. Richard Grow, retired from US EPA, advocated for increased training for Air Districts in social and racial equity as they prioritize facilities for BARCT retrofitting and other activities. Community advocate Mary Valdemar called for action in proposing ways that agencies can implement equitable practices, "for example progressive stack, consensus models, inclusive outreach and meeting planning so this kind of community-focused model does not exist just in AB 617 but in all decision-making bodies. Let's BE the model!"

PANEL: THE PEOPLE'S BLUEPRINT

Moderator:

- Luis Olmedo (Comité Civico Del Valle)

Panelists:

- Ms. Margaret Gordon (West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project)
- Kevin Hamilton (Central California Asthma Collaborative)

The People's Blueprint was launched through the AB 617 Consultation Group in recognition that the original AB 617 Blueprint developed by CARB did not adequately address the values, issues, and processes needed to support an environmental justice approach to the policy implementation. Members of the Consultation Group representing environmental justice and health equity organizations self-organized (and later worked with a facilitator from Harder+Company) to develop the document which has now been submitted to CARB as a draft⁷. This panel involved a dialogue between three members of the People's Blueprint Writers Group.

Ms. Margaret led off with the observation that the original Blueprint did not include any explicit language on environmental justice, community engagement, and equity. Therefore, the People's Blueprint is intended to fill these gaps and align them more closely with the community values and visions of AB 617. She highlighted that the People's Blueprint builds from this foundation and includes operational issues such as participatory budgeting, community empowerment, effective enforcement, agency accountability, and conflict resolution. She also raised a concept that was emphasized throughout much of the convening, which is the need to address the physical, emotional, historical, and multi-generational trauma of racist city and rural community planning that have disadvantaged communities of color for decades. Ms. Margaret and others related how waking up in the middle of the night to care for a child having an asthma attack, and not having the health insurance, transportation, or flexible employment to get them care is traumatizing and reflects systemic racism in the economy and community planning. The continual air pollution and

inequities in health impacts exacerbate this trauma in the communities. Kevin Hamilton further stressed how people feel unsafe in their own communities because of this lack of health equity to address poor air quality events such as wildfires for example. He advocates for the development of tools that can benefit multiple communities dealing with similar health issues.

Building upon the need to address trauma and environmental equity, panelists called for creating more equal partnerships where the communities lead the conversations from beginning to end. They called for the People's Blueprint to place environmental justice and equity at the forefront and account for the impacts at the community level while empowering communities to have a leading voice at the table. Comments from the audience further affirm these calls such as from Mary Valdemar, a CSC member, who made a distinction between a "community inclusion vs. community-driven" process. She and other participants emphasized that AB 617 needs to be less agency-centric and top-down focused; it needs to be geared more towards bottom-up and community-led processes. As Valdemar stated, "let the community speak first." To address the implementation of AB 617 across the state, community members from the audience raised important issues of how the Blueprint must address how CARB can use its authority in working with other state, local and regional agencies, particularly on funding expenditures, land use, and mobile sources.

ROUNDTABLES: LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Resource persons:

- Richard Grow (West Oakland CSC)
- Azibuike Akaba (Bay Area Air Quality Management District)
- Kevin Ruano-Hernandez (Richmond CSC)

This session emphasized critical reflection on the past and current progress to guide the future path of AB 617. The speakers discussed the importance of building strong partnerships, especially with the local residents. Within these partnerships, it is critical to be aware of the challenges that particular stakeholders face to appropriately provide support and effectively allocate responsibilities. Kevin Ruano-Hernandez noted that some approaches can be simple yet powerful including a focus on active listening and asking who is not in the room and whose voices are not being heard. He also noted that language barriers have prevented full participation for some non-English speakers. Azibuike Akaba observed that, "There's no success without the community. The Air District can present as many plans as they want, but in reality, the co-leadership is very slow because you have to build trust." Richard Grow called for better integration between AB 617 and AB 32 (California's Cap and Trade climate change mitigation policy) as they both share the goals of pursuing environmental equity. Grow noted that unfortunately, these seem to be on separate tracks within CARB. After implementing both policies for several years (for nearly two decades in the case of AB 32) there has been a lot of learning on how to implement racial and environmental equity in systematic ways but this learning has not been fully realized. Overall, participants called for a learning approach. While mistakes are inevitable, Akaba reminded everyone that "We're learning. This is all a learning experience. Learn from [mistakes] and build on them."

Resource Person:

- Kevin Hamilton (Central California Asthma Coalition)

This roundtable involved a continued discussion about the People's Blueprint. Kevin Hamilton, as a member of the Writers Group, provided context on the People's Blueprint writing process and the motivations for its creation. According to Hamilton, the Writers Group pushed to foreground social and racial equity in

the AB 617 process. The group attempted to define authority (especially in the case of ambiguity between CARB and the Air Districts). One area in need of clarity is how AB 617 will integrate attention to mobile and stationary sources. The People’s Blueprint is also intended to provide the basis for resolving conflicts that have characterized the implementation of AB 617 in its first several years. One participant in the chat called for greater transparency in the writing and formalization of the People’s Blueprint like this roundtable and the convening as a whole serves as an arena for cross-pollination and equitable discussion.

Several attendees introduced important insights on and potential improvements for the Blueprint. On the topic of equity, Mary Valdemar pointed out that agencies could have chosen to be more inclusive in their operations before being prompted by AB 617 if “authentic community-driven input” was at the core of their values. Several participants noted that community members are not acknowledged enough for their work, and compensation should be included in the People’s Blueprint (Note: the issue of standardizing stipends for CSC members is included in the People’s Blueprint). While the idea of a community-driven process has been popularized by AB 617, many Air Districts are just beginning to focus on learning how to support these democratic processes and to build capacity on issues of racial equity. For example, some staff in the South Coast AQMD are reading *The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein on the history of racial segregation through land use and housing policies in the United States. Others such as the BAAQMD have received extensive racial equity trainings by CARB based on the Government Alliance for Racial Equity. The BAAQMD has also established a learning initiative on participatory budgeting and is planning to hold these trainings with both staff and CSC members in attendance.

Resource Persons:

- Vincent Valdez (South Sacramento/ Florin CSC)
- Janice Lam Snyder (Sacramento Air Quality Management District)

This roundtable discussion focused primarily on the current AB 617 process in the South Sacramento-Florin community, what current challenges are being faced, and strategies on how to move forward. The dialogue was led by two resource people: Vincent Valdez who is a community member of the CSC and Janice Lam Snyder who coordinates the CSC with the Sacramento Air Quality Management District.

Valdez opened the conversation with how AB 617 has broadened the environmental justice community in Sacramento and sparked more outreach with the residents. As part of the United Latinos, a community organizing network in Sacramento, Valdez highlighted the important groundwork that this group has been engaged with by setting up both outdoors and indoor air monitors around the community as well as mapping residents’ stories of their experiences with poor air quality. By elevating these stories, United Latinos aim to illustrate the daily struggles and experiences people go through that directly impact their health. Vincent related a story, “I took [a monitor] to an elderly lady when the smoke was around. She told me how smoky it was in her house that her smoke detectors went off.”

From the Air District perspective, Lam Snyder described South Sacramento-Florin as being the sole remaining CSC that only is approved for a CAMP and has not been selected as a CERP community. Currently, the Sacramento AQMD has adopted their CAMP and the CSC is now in the implementation process. However, after obtaining air monitoring data the question remains of how does that materialize into real emissions reductions? One of the major themes from this dialogue was the challenge of moving towards a CERP without appropriate funding. Lam Snyder and other Sacramento CSC members cited the lack of sufficient funding as a significant impediment to the community meeting its goals of improving air quality and health for local residents. The Air District recognizes that it and the CSC need to be creative in thinking outside the box to achieve these benefits with limited resources. Lam Snyder praised the CSC

for being more proactive in taking more responsibility and ownership of the program.

Looking forward, session participants focused on how to achieve meaningful change through the AB 617 policy process that addresses mobile and stationary source emissions? Valdez called for writing more letters of support to politicians and different agencies who can support the work that the communities are currently doing. Pat Shelby, co-chair of the South Sacramento/ Florin CSC called for more collective action to address these challenges, “There is too much to do and not enough people to do it. We cannot leave those people behind. You have the right people at the table, but there needs to be more support.”

FINAL REFLECTION PANEL

Moderator:

- Jonathan London (UC Davis)

Panelists:

- Deldi Reyes (CARB)
- Diane Takvorian (CARB Board)
- Domingo Vigil (San Diego Air Pollution Management District)
- Ms. Margaret Gordon (West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project)

This panel closed the event with the purpose of asking leaders from the CARB board, CARB staff leadership, Air District leadership, and community leadership what they are taking away from the event and what will they commit towards meeting the goal of the convening which was to chart a course towards AB 617 meeting its ambitious goals of environmental justice.

A consistent theme across all panelists was the central importance of building and rebuilding trusting relationships between CSCs, Air Districts, and CARB. This relates directly to proactively addressing conflicts and increasing collaboration. At the core of this transformation is shifting more authority and decision-making from the agencies to the communities most affected by air pollution and the historical legacies that created these inequitable institutions and disadvantaged landscapes. Domingo Vigil emphasized the need for Air Districts to listen more carefully to the needs and concerns of local residents and organizations. Ms. Margaret recalled her opening remarks and statements throughout the event of the need to reconnect with the historical and ongoing trauma for people of color and low-income people living in overburdened communities. An explicit and thorough identification of the values and actions needed to achieve environmental justice will be necessary for ways that have not yet been achieved in the AB 617 process. Deldi Reyes acknowledged the issues of trauma in communities of color and expressed her hope that the AB 617 process would not add to this trauma. She expressed regret that something that is supposed to bring support for overburdened communities has led to traumatization as communities find themselves competing amongst each other for funding and trying to gain control of the funding being allocated within their CAMP and CERP development and implementation. Like many throughout the event, she supported the idea of participatory budgeting but also counseled that it is important to come to a shared understanding of what this means as there are many potential models and approaches that can be adopted.

Bringing into the question of what the panelists can commit to based on what they have learned, Deldi Reyes pledged to engage all stakeholders in a process to provide the benefits of AB 617 beyond the 15 current communities and others that will be selected in the future to all eligible communities in the state. Reyes also committed to both working with the People’s Blueprint as well as going further to ensure that the goals of stakeholders across the state are achieved. Diane Takvorian called out CARB and the Air

Districts as making a mistake in not seeing AB 617 as potentially transformative of all agency activities and to change the business as usual models for good. She also affirmed Ms. Margaret and other convening participants that systemic racism and traditional power structures have created this status quo and must be examined carefully and addressed pro-actively. She noted that innovative practices such as power-sharing, participatory budgeting, community right to know and right to act frameworks must become standard practices in all Air Districts. Domingo Vigil also supported the use of participatory budgeting and developing stronger agency-community partnerships. To make this more than a slogan, Ms. Margaret challenged CARB and Air District leadership and staff to clearly define their positions in interacting with communities. She stated, “If you aren't going to be an advocate, be honest and say, ‘I am not here to be your advocate, I am here to do a job that was assigned to me.’ Don’t create false expectations for yourself.”

Audience questions and comments echoed a number of the themes of the panel and the event as a whole. One consistent theme was the call for public agencies to be more fully respectful and to integrate communities’ expertise and lived life experiences together with agency technical knowledge more thoroughly. Charles Reed from West Oakland described this as follows, “It takes our experiences to mill with your knowledge to figure out what needs to get done.” Finally, Mary Valdemar, from the San Bernardino/Muscoy CSC observed that the event was challenging because there has not been a consistent process for sharing experiences and models and suggested additional ongoing processes using interactive technologies to document and sustain the dialogue.



Key Themes

Several key themes emerged across all the sessions. At the broadest level, while nearly all participants stated that they supported the “community-based approach” envisioned in the statute, the AB 617 Blueprint, statements from Air Districts, and demands of the CSCs, there were significant differences in what this meant in practice. In particular, the questions under discussion and debate at the convening – and in the policy implementation process as a whole is, how should decision-making power be distributed and how can differences in interests be resolved? The convening made significant progress in defining what the interests of the different stakeholders are, where the tensions lie between them, what have been some promising practices towards harmonizing between them, and what are some potential visions of how this could be enhanced in the future. However, it must be acknowledged, that because of the magnitude of the gaps between perspectives of the stakeholders, much more remains to be done to create forums in which mutually acceptable solutions can be developed.

In what follows, we synthesize some of the key perspectives expressed by participants in the convening.

COMMUNITY STEERING COMMITTEES

CSC members are seeking more decision-making power in the development of the CAMPs and CERPs as well as substantive actions by the Air Districts and supported by CARB to significantly reduce emissions. They want to have the CSC process driven primarily by their members instead of serving in a consultative role where the Air Districts prepare the CAMPs and CERPs and ask for input from the CSCs. While the Air Districts and CARB describe themselves as supporting this community-based character, many CSC members do not perceive this to be the case in practice.

To shift this distribution of power, many CSC members are calling for the use of participatory budgeting in which the CSCs set priorities and make decisions for how the AB 617 funds are allocated instead of just providing input on spending. This recommendation comes with the demand to have more transparent reporting of spending by the Air Districts to CARB than is currently in place. This demand also includes ensuring that the Air Districts are undertaking AB 617 measures over and above their existing activities and using more rulemaking, permitting, and enforcement in addition to industry and residential incentives to achieve clean air and human health goals.

CSC members also called for more explicit attention paid to structural racism as it has shaped the environmental and social disparities in their communities, more proactive approaches to addressing it, and the need for increased competency in environmental justice and racial equity by Air District and CARB staff.

Finally, some CSC members (and others at the convening) called for a more explicit emphasis on reducing public health disparities as a goal of the policy implementation which would include integrating health metrics to guide and assess the success of the policy in the AB 617 communities as well in places being targeted by the policy’s statewide implementation measures such as Best Available Retrofit Control Technology (BARCT).

AIR DISTRICTS

Air Districts describe themselves as struggling to respond to the demands of the CSCs based on limited jurisdictional authority, time and funding. One fundamental tension is that while the CSCs are calling for increased decision-making authority and CARB's AB 617 Blueprint recommends strong community voice, the AB 617 statute is clear that Air Districts are only required to consult with community representatives as they develop the CAMPs and CERPs. In particular, because Air District approval of the CERPs is considered a legislative action, it cannot be delegated by the Air Districts to the CSCs. This sets up a fundamental tension with the CSCs, which, as described above are seeking greater decision-making authority. This tension over the distribution of authority would take a legislative revision to the statute to resolve something multiple participants in the convening suggested.

As another example of the challenges faced by Air Districts, many of the demands from the CSCs to improve air quality and protect human health require changes in land use (e.g., zoning, locating of pollution sources relative to the housing, approval of transportation infrastructure, and routes) that the districts are precluded by law and that need to involve city and county governments. Other measures require actions by ports, transportation districts, pesticide regulators (county and state), school districts, and other agencies that the Air Districts cannot compel to act and with which they have not traditionally engaged. Many also describe a mismatch between the expectations placed on the Air Districts by the law and the resources the districts have available to meet those expectations. Finally, many Air Districts describe themselves as genuinely trying to respond to the community demands but are not receiving acknowledgment for their efforts, which has led to problems with staff morale.

CARB

In their presentations and comments, many CARB staff and Board Members described the agency in the challenging position of needing to balance its leadership role, as stated in the authorizing legislation and its support of the CSCs and their demands for greater authority, all while respecting the limitations and authorities of the Air Districts. This latter factor is experienced in pressure placed on CARB to be proactive at the CSC meetings instead of just observing and answering questions when asked. Making sure that they have the staff available with the appropriate expertise in any individual meeting can be a challenge to predict.

CARB leadership also described contending with the challenges of spreading the benefits of AB 617 to the hundreds of other eligible communities throughout the state on a flat budget that has only been able to fund 15 communities across three cycles and will never be able to include but a fraction of these other communities. Therefore, CARB is seeking ways to infuse the principles and practices of AB 617 into its other programs to support communities outside of AB 617, which will be a long-term process.

CARB is seeking to improve its statewide leadership of AB 617 by supporting the production of a People's Blueprint, developed by a Writers' Group made up of EJ leaders, most of whom are members of the AB 617 Consultation Group, that incorporates an environmental justice lens and calls for many of the demands by CSCs for greater authority and decision-making roles among other issues. The People's Blueprint will significantly inform the update by CARB of the Program Blueprint as will the experiences and perspectives of other stakeholders as well as partners such as the Air Districts⁸.

Looking Towards The Future

True to its title, the convening raised important issues related to the past, present, and future of AB 617 and encouraged dialogue between the diverse stakeholders involved in the implementation of the policy.

Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia's keynote address lifted up several issues that would weave throughout the rest of the event. Perhaps the most fundamental one was her description of AB 617 as a "down payment" not a full solution to the state's air quality disparities nor one that is likely to receive significantly more resources (in fact the budgets have been flat over the past years. This suggests that clear and collaborative goal setting by CARB, the Air Districts, the CSCs, and the legislature will be needed to align visions and expectations with available resources. It also suggests that additional strategies be developed to infuse AB 617 principles (such as a focus on social and racialized air quality and health disparities and increasing community power in air quality protection) throughout all elements of CARB's and the Air Districts' operations. Several sessions addressed this need and offered a range of promising practices such as industry-wide rules, indirect source rules, and the use of the best available retrofit control technology (BARCT). These systemic solutions appear to be promising and should be pursued with greater emphasis in the future. This could be the basis of a multi-stakeholder convening designed to explore these opportunities.

Assemblywoman Garcia's description of her intention for AB 617 to address structural racism and exclusion of communities of color who have been overburdened by environmental hazards from environmental decision-making was echoed throughout the event and represents both an opportunity to redress and repair historical injustices as well as a challenge for any one policy to resolve these systemic issues. One framework that was heard throughout the convening was how environmental and racial injustice have caused trauma in low-income communities and communities of color and the way in which AB 617 must involve a trauma-informed approach⁹ to address these deep-seated issues. A related concept brought up by Dr. Rachel Morello Frosch was that of a reparations-based approach to AB 617, that pro-actively seeks to compensate those affected by historical injustices through financial and other means¹⁰.

Many participants focused less on the amount of funding than the processes through which it is allocated with a call for greater transparency and accountability on the part of CARB and the Air Districts. Many sessions included a recommendation for a "participatory budgeting" (PB) process that would put decision-making about spending AB 617 funds more directly in the hands of the CSCs with CARB and the Air Districts serving as technical assistance resources instead of singular decision-makers. This is promising as it does not require any additional funding for Air District but will likely need legislative actions to allow for the delegation of budget decisions to community stakeholders. Efforts by CARB and some Air Districts such as the BAAQMD to study and develop common standards for PB are promising next steps. Given the wide range of practices of participatory budgeting, it will be useful to convene a group of CARB, Air District, and CSC leaders, along with some select PB experts to develop a common framework for what implementing PB could look like through the AB 617 network¹¹.

Drawing from the panel on AB 617 and Public Health moderated by Dr. Venise Curry, the convening focused on the need to better integrate public health as a goal of the policy and innovations such as health metrics, health surveys, and longitudinal health studies as promising practices. This expansion from an initial focus on emissions reductions to exposure reductions and eventually to reducing racialized health disparities would represent an important improvement in the policy implementation. The central place of health disparities in AB 617 would make a valuable topic for a future convening.

Beyond these operational issues of what is implemented through AB 617 is the larger theme of how it is implemented: and specifically, how to build trust between public agencies and communities. Many sessions raised the issue of frayed or insufficient levels of trust and the need to enhance this if the collaborative approach envisioned for AB 617 is to be achieved. Often these issues had a racial dimension to them, referring to long-standing racial disparities in the AB 617 communities as well as current-day concerns about how communities of color are being treated by CARB and the Air Districts. Developing active listening, conflict resolution, structural racism, and cultural competency training -- as is being initiated by CARB and several Air Districts -is a promising practice to address these historical and continuing patterns¹².

Many of these issues are addressed in the draft of the People's Blueprint currently under review by the AB 617 Consultation Group and CARB. Both the finalization of the Program Blueprint and the effort to engage in ways to expand the benefit of the program will provide a crucial catalyst to move these ideas into practice. The fact that CARB staff and Board leadership have made strong commitments to work from the final version of the Blueprint in partnership with community leaders suggests that many of the issues raised on the convening will be carefully considered as the agency continues to enhance the program. Likewise, the call to action by Ms. Margaret Gordon for all participants to step up and engage more fully in ensuring that AB 617 meets its ambitious goals closed the event on a positive note that also included an appreciation of the great amount of work to be done.

MODELS FOR FUTURE DIALOGUE

This convening was intended to offer a forum for dialogue between the diverse leaders in the AB 617 process including CARB, the Air Districts, CSC members, and other interested parties. Working with an expert community planning committee, the OCAP team at CARB, and with input from Air Districts helped identify key topics and speakers for each session. The convening was most successful in setting a broad table of topics for discussion, raising key issues, and bringing a diverse array of stakeholders in one place to listen and learn from each other. The event was less successful in creating sufficient space for dialogue across all parties due to the number and short length of the sessions and the compressed timeline (just 6 hours across two days). Many participants stated they appreciated the opportunity to begin the conversation but sought more and different types of forums to go deeper. There are a number of ways that this could be accomplished.

1. A longer comprehensive conference (one or more full days). This would clearly provide more time for sessions, but also represent a potential barrier for CSC members with jobs and other daytime obligations.
2. A series of short sessions over a longer period of time, for example, one 3-hour evening session per week over a month.
3. A series of issue-specific convenings on the topics highlighted above (for example participatory budgeting; methods to track and reduce health disparities; addressing racial trauma and racial equity; statewide strategies).
4. A "community of practice" model on specific topics in which participants would meet regularly to share and reflect on their work¹³.
5. All of these models could be enhanced through an on-going assessment of AB 617 such as through the Snapshot report or reports with more comprehensive methods.

It is recommended that leaders from CARB, Air Districts and CSCs convene to discuss these and other options to identify a commonly-agreed model or models for future dialogue to reflect the great interest across the AB 617 network in collaborative learning and action.

APPENDICES

The full agenda for the 2021 Convening can be found [here](#).

The Snapshot Report can be found here together with the video and slides. [to be inserted]

Videos from the event can be found here [to be inserted].

Speaker Bios: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Kn4eTgp_BJazpJmqqCE5onU11_Z3e1hZKMEy7mzU6IA/edit?usp=sharing

BACKGROUND ON AB 617¹

Upon passage of the AB 617 statute through the legislature and its signature by the governor, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) became the lead agency on the law’s implementation. Part of this leadership is enacted through CARB’s AB 617 Blueprint, which provides specific implementation guidance. Through AB 617, regional air districts nominate, and CARB select communities to develop Community Air Monitoring Plans (CAMPs), Community Emissions Reduction Programs (CERPs), or both to guide air quality improvement strategies. The CAMPs set up systems of air quality monitoring focused on the sources and types of pollution in the designated communities, whereas CERPs consist of strategies to achieve reductions in emissions and exposures. The CAMPs and CERPs are intended to be guided by CSCs (composed of neighborhood residents, community organizations, academics, local governments, and businesses) and produced by air districts. Under the statute, the CSCs recommend, the Air Districts produce, and CARB makes the final action on the approval of the CERPs

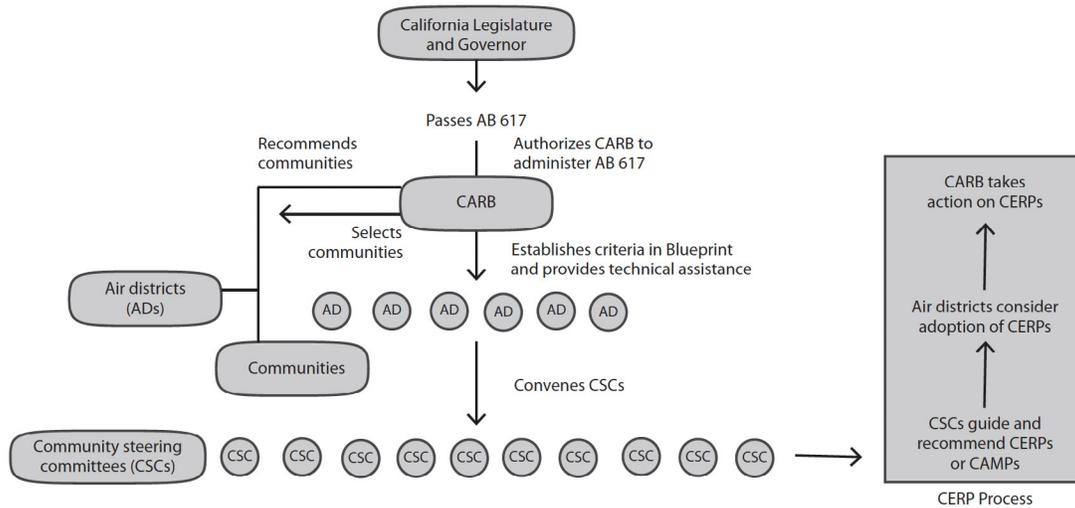


FIGURE 1— Assembly Bill 617 Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP) and Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) Policy Development Process: California

Figure 1: AB 617 Implementation Process
Credit: Katrina Manrique

Note: CARB is the California Air Resources Board
CERPs are Community Emissions Reduction Programs
CAMPs are Community Air Monitoring Plans

DISCLAIMERS

The opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not represent the official position or policy of the State of California, the California Environmental Protection Agency, or the California Air Resources Board. The mention of trade names, products, and organizations does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

ENDNOTES

- 1 For recent reports on AB 617 see: London, Jonathan; Peter Nguyen, Mia Dawson, and Katrina Manrique (2020). Community Engagement in AB 617: An Evaluation of Challenges, Successes, Lessons Learned and Recommendations for the Future. University of California, Davis. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-10/17RD035%20-%20English%20-%20AB%20617%20UC%20Davis%20Report%20Final%20for%20distribution.pdf>;
- 2 For background information about AB 617 see: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/capp>
- 3 For information on studies that link air quality to health impacts see: Casey, J. A., Karasek, D., Ogburn, E. L., Goin, D. E., Dang, K., Braveman, P. A., & Morello-Frosch, R. (2018). Retirements of coal and oil power plants in California: association with reduced preterm birth among populations nearby. *American journal of epidemiology*, 187(8), 1586-1594; Casey, J. A., Gemmill, A., Karasek, D., Ogburn, E. L., Goin, D. E., & Morello-Frosch, R. (2018). Increase in fertility following coal and oil power plant retirements in California. *Environmental Health*, 17(1), 1-10.
- 4 For information about different styles of consensus see: <https://www.leadstrat.com/5-finger-consensus/>
- 5 The Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) is an epidemiologic technique designed to provide public health leaders and emergency managers with household-based information about a community. See: <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/casper/default.htm>
- 6 More information about Best Available Retrofit Technology (BARCT) can be found here: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/expedited-barct>
- 7 To access the People's Blueprint please find at the link below: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/community-air-protection-program/community-air-protection-blueprint/peoples>
- 8 For information about the People's Blueprint and the broader process of CARB's Blueprint development see: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2021-09/Blueprint%20Process%209.8.21%20FNL_v3.pdf
- 9 Resources on applying trauma-informed care on a systemwide basis include the following: Fortuna, L. R., Tolou-Shams, M., Robles-Ramamurthy, B., & Porche, M. V. (2020). Inequity and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color in the United States: The need for a trauma-informed social justice response. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12(5), 443; Mukherjee, Dhruvodi, and Subhashree Sanyal. "Trauma-Informed Approach to Climate Change." *Handbook of Climate Change Management: Research, Leadership, Transformation* (2020): 1-15.
- 10 A powerful explanation of reparations is provided by Ta-Nehisi Coates in "The Case for Reparations" found here <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>
- 11 Resources on participatory budgeting include the following: The Participatory Budgeting Project <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/>. A wide range of articles and videos on participatory budgeting can be found on their site: <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/run-pb/videos-articles/Oakland> Participatory Budgeting: <https://pboakland.org/>. For an academic article see: Karner, Alex, et al. "The view from the top of Arnstein's ladder: Participatory budgeting and the promise of community control." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 85.3 (2019): 236-254.
- 12 Resources for integrating race equity work into government agencies can be found through the Government Alliance for Race and Equity (GARE). GARE is a national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. <https://www.racialequityalliance.org/>
- 13 One of the classic descriptions of a Community or Practice is found here: Wenger, E., McDermott, R. A., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating communities of practice: A guide to managing knowledge*. Harvard Business Press.