

State of California Air Resources Board

Board Item Summary

Item # 26-4-2: Public Meeting to Consider the Community Air Protection (AB 617) Consultation Group Charter and Appointment of Members to the Consultation Group

Staff Recommendation:

In June 2026, the California Air Resources Board (CARB or Board) will consider staff's recommendation to the Board to approve the Consultation Group Charter and the appointment of new primary and alternate member candidates for appointment to the Consultation Group.

Discussion:

Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617) (C. Garcia, Stats. 2017, Ch. 136) requires CARB to prepare and update every five years a statewide strategy, known as the *Program Blueprint* to reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants in communities affected by high cumulative exposure burden and to do consultation with environmental justice organizations, air districts, affected industry, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, the Scientific Review Panel on Toxic Air Contaminants, and other interested stakeholders.

In January 2018, CARB first convened a 25-member Consultation Group to advise CARB on the implementation of the Community Air Protection Program and development of the Program Blueprint. The Consultation Group, first chaired by Board member John Balmes and later co-chaired by former Board member Davina Hurt, included representatives of CARB's Scientific Review Panel on Toxic Air Contaminants, air districts, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, environmental justice organizations, business, industry, and a tribal government.

In September 2018, CARB adopted its first statewide strategy to reduce air pollution in highly impacted communities. From 2018 to 2024, the Consultation Group advised CARB on the implementation of the Program Blueprint. In Fall 2021, a subgroup of environmental justice leaders from the Consultation Group, with support from CARB, developed the *People's Blueprint* to highlight lessons learned from a community-based and environmental justice perspective to inform Blueprint 2.0 in October 2023. CARB adopted Blueprint 2.0, the updated statewide strategy and implementation guidance, to support commitments to

current Program communities and extend benefits to consistently nominated communities. Goal 1, Priority Action 4, in Blueprint 2.0 calls for revitalizing the Consultation Group by expanding membership to include representatives from consistently nominated communities. In March 2024, CARB dissolved the Consultation Group due to member attrition, with many having served since the Consultation Group's inception in 2018.

Between 2024 and 2025, CARB began its solicitation for membership applications to the Consultation Group. In January 2025, after a four-month application period, CARB staff reviewed and evaluated 50 candidate applications. In June 2025, CARB staff recommended the Board appoint 27 new members and alternates to the reinvigorated Consultation Group. Board member John Balmes was appointed to serve as the Consultation Group Chair. In October 2025, Board member Diane Takvorian was appointed as the 28th member and Co-Chair.

Proposed Consultation Group Charter

In November 2024, CARB staff released a draft Charter for the Consultation Group to promote transparency and accountability in the Program's implementation. The draft was informed by comments from previous [Consultation Group meetings \(2018-2023\)](#), the [February 2022 Assessment Report](#), and CARB's [2023 Environmental Justice Advisory Committee Charter](#). In July 2025, CARB staff incorporated comments from newly appointed Consultation Group members, who developed [meeting agreements and goals](#) for the draft Charter.

From July 2025 to March 2026, an ad hoc group, a small subset of rotating volunteer members of the Consultation Group, refined the draft Charter, meeting twice in February 2026. On March 25, 2026, the Consultation Group unanimously approved the draft Charter.

The draft Charter does not alter or modify the terms of any law and does not constitute legal advice. This draft Charter is not intended, and should not be construed to define the legal relationship between CARB and anyone else. The draft Charter outlines the advisory body's role in supporting CARB's Community Air Protection Program and Blueprint 2.0. It prioritizes equity and environmental justice by focusing on overburdened communities and encouraging meaningful community and stakeholder input in air quality planning.

Proposed Consultation Group Members

The Board's approval of Resolution 26-9 will authorize the appointment of one primary member and five alternate members to the Consultation Group. If appointed, the Consultation Group primary and alternate members listed in the resolution and below will serve a four-year term as set out in the Board resolution and the Consultation Group Charter.

Recommended Members:

1. Natasha Dulik, San Diego Association of Governments (Primary)

2. David Edwards, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (Alternate)
3. Charisma Acey, University of California at Berkeley (Alternate)
4. Ismael Garcia, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (Alternate)
5. Kirstin Kolpitcke, California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance (Alternate)
6. Lizette Ruiz, Southeast Los Angeles Community Steering Committee (Alternate)

Summary and Impacts:

The Consultation Group presents an important opportunity for a diverse group of representatives with different perspectives, expertise, and experience to advise CARB on the implementation of Blueprint 2.0. Impacts on internal resources include ongoing CARB staff to coordinate all matters related to the Consultation Group, in compliance with requirements of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, as well as funding needed to provide reasonable compensation and travel costs for members.