



Appointment of Members to the Assembly Bill 32 2026-2029 Environmental Justice Advisory Committee

July 23, 2026

Overview

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Background

- The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill (AB) 32; Stats. 2006, chapter 488) directed CARB to convene an Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (Committee)
- The Committee comprises community members representing overburdened communities
- Committee members create recommendations for CARB's Board on AB 32
- In March 2023, committee members voted to approve the Charter.
 - Consists of 11 members serving a 36-month term
 - 8 public meetings plus one joint Board meeting are held annually

Committee Solicitation

- Solicitation period was from February 20 to May 5, 2026
- Robust outreach was conducted:
 - 200+ community-based organizations
 - 18+ external departments and agencies
 - Tribal representatives
- Requirements from the AB 32 statute were prioritized
- Screening committee reviewed Committee applications
- Staff recommended 11 members

Member Recommendations

Name	Organizational Affiliation	Role
Alex Mantanona	Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)	Policy Advocate
Catherine Baltazar	Climate Resolve	Associate Director, Advocacy & Organizing
Edidiong Mendie	Ezrach Brain Trust Association	Executive Director
Franco Pacheco Alternate: Karla Cervantes	Inland Valley Alliance for Environmental Justice	Co-Founder
Jeffrey Sanchez	Sequoia Foundation (Bay Area Public Health Non-Profit)	Executive Director
Jennifer Elkins	Grassroots Organizers for Accountable Landfills (GOAL)	Leadership Team
Kamillah Ealom	Bayview Community Concerned Citizens	Program Director
Leonard Powell Alternate: Lawrence Brooks	Hopland Band of Pomo Indians	Tribal Council Member
Martha Dina Argüello	Physicians for Social Responsibility- Los Angeles (PSR-LA)	Executive Director
Rio Oxas	RAHOK	Principal
Thomas Helme	Valley Improvement Projects (VIP)	Co-Founder/Co-Director

Environmental Justice Advisory Committee Member Spotlight

Dr. Alex Mantanona



- Scientist turned Environmental Justice Policy Advocate working for the Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) out of the Oxnard office, his hometown
- Holds a B.S. in Biochemistry and M.S. in Chemistry from CSU Northridge, as well as a PhD in Chemistry from UC San Diego
- Advocates for just policies that address both air pollutants and climate emissions with a focus on freight coming out of the Port of Hueneme

Catherine Baltazar



- Associate Director of Advocacy & Organizing at Climate Resolve, where she leads initiatives that translate community priorities into equitable climate investments across Los Angeles County
- A Los Angeles native and daughter of Mayan-Guatemalan immigrants, who spent the past decade working at the intersection of community organizing, climate policy, and environmental justice
- Believed that statewide climate policy is most effective when informed by both community experience and implementation expertise

Edidiong (Dr. Didi) Mendie



- Executive Director of Ezrach Brain Trust Association
- Leads initiatives on air quality, waste management, climate resilience, and economic and workforce development in South Los Angeles, turning resident priorities into evidence-based solutions
- Seeks to serve because her career rests on the premise the Committee was built to advance; communities bearing the heaviest pollution burden must hold real authority over policies meant to protect them
- Holds a Ph.D. in Administration of Justice, an LL.M. in Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Law, and is an Attorney licensed in Nigeria (B.L and LL.B.)

Franco (Lucilo) Pacheco



- Lifelong resident of Riverside County, raised in the City of Perris and the community of Mead Valley. His professional background is in transportation, where he has spent more than a decade working as a heavy-duty mechanic in public transit
- An environmental advocate focused on addressing the impacts of rapid logistics expansion in the Inland Empire
- Believes that reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality are essential for Riverside County, which consistently ranks among the most polluted in the nation

Karla Cervantes

Alternate for Franco Pacheco



- Proud resident of Mead Valley and Chapter Coordinator for the Sierra Club San Geronimo Chapter
- Organizer who connects with residents across the region, and advocates for policies that protect her environment and the health of her communities
- Interested in how AB 32 can be implemented in ways that not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also deliver meaningful improvements in air quality, public health, and equity for communities like Mead Valley and surrounding areas

Jeffrey (Jeff) Sanchez



- Native Californian, environmental public health professional, and non-profit leader with more than 30 years of experience advancing environmental health, air quality, and community engagement
- Executive Director of Sequoia Foundation, where he leads partnerships that expand community air monitoring, environmental health education, youth workforce development, and public health initiatives serving communities disproportionately impacted by pollution
- Believes that the communities most impacted by pollution should help shape California's climate and air quality policies

Jennifer Elkins



- Proud mother of three, an advocate for communities living near landfills, and an avid leader in environmental justice
- Helped push California to adopt strong landfill emissions standards and leads advocacy for environmental justice and communities impacted by the mismanagement of landfills
- Helped launch Grassroots Organizers for Accountable Landfills, a network of frontline advocates and community leaders directly impacted by landfills around the country

Kamillah Ealom



- Community leader rooted in Bayview Hunters Point and dedicated to advancing environmental and social justice for marginalized fence-line and shoreline communities
- Focuses on educating and empowering residents and ensuring that Bayview families are heard, valued, and centered in decisions that impact their health, environment, and future
- Advocate for community-driven solutions that promote environmental justice, strengthen public health, and ensure that frontline communities share in the benefits of California's climate investments

Leonard (Lenny) Powell, J.D.



- Serves as an elected Tribal Council Member and has held executive leadership roles across Tribal and non-tribal governments throughout California
- Longtime advocate for healthier California communities, focused on reducing pollution, improving housing, and strengthening partnerships between Tribal governments and public agencies
- Applied to the Committee to ensure climate policy reflects the experiences of Tribal, rural, and underserved communities, building on his work in energy resilience, decarbonization, and racial-equity efforts

Lawrence (Larry) Washington Brooks

Alternate for Lenny Powell



- Collaborates with national and state partners on indoor air quality, habitability, and lead-poisoning prevention
- Lead Paint Hazard consultant and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Lead and Environmental Hazards Association
- Previously worked for Sacramento County in the Environmental Management Department and later Planning and Community Development
- Served as Director of Alameda County's Healthy Homes Department and Lead Prevention Program

Martha Dina Argüello



- Nearly 50 years of nonprofit leadership advancing public health, social justice, and environmental justice
- Began as a youth organizer and grew into a respected coalition builder and strategic advocate
- Champions community-driven solutions to California's most urgent environmental and health challenges

Rio Oxas



- Two-Spirit consultant, educator, speaker, and mindful real estate agent of Nawat and Mayan descent, rooted in Los Angeles and active in a multicultural land care collective in Tulare County
- Through RAHOK, cultivates “Eco-Hoods” that connect race, ancestry, health, outdoor access, and community knowledge
- Joined the Committee to advance climate justice rooted in ancestral perspectives, ensuring AB 32 addresses inequities and integrates community-centered, culturally grounded environmental practices for vulnerable communities

Thomas Helme, J.D.



- Co-Founder of Valley Improvement Projects (VIP), a leading grassroots EJ group in the Northern San Joaquin Valley that recently succeeded in shutting down California's last municipal waste incinerator
- Leads VIP's work on zero waste, air monitoring, pesticide safety, and climate justice advocacy
- Coordinator of the California Environmental Justice Coalition (CEJC), the state's largest EJ coalition with nearly 100 members focused on reducing pollution in overburdened communities

Committee Process Update

- Option to rotate Co-Chairs annually
- The Committee's Co-Chairs will receive \$100 for Co-Chair Meetings
- Expansive onboarding procedures:
 - Update on the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act and Civil Rights Policy
 - Presentation on CARB's travel procedures
 - Guidance on CARB's workplace, including ethics, CARB's Conflict-of-Interest Code, and anti-harassment training

Next Steps for the Committee Process

