



NEWS

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The Bay Area Air District sounds alarm on state's greenhouse gas reduction proposal *AB 617 and AB 398 would limit regional efforts to regulate air pollution and GHG's*

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air District has sent a strong letter to the Governor's office, expressing an "opposition unless amended" position on state bills AB 617 and AB 398.

Although the Air District acknowledges and supports the importance of extending the California Cap & Trade program and appreciates several provisions of the bills, including increases in the amount of penalties that violators of air quality regulations pay, the District has expressed four primary areas of concern in the proposed legislation.

"We object to legislation that attempts to strip away our authority, muddle jurisdictional lines and propose flawed control strategies," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Bay Area Air District. "Local agencies have always been better equipped to address local permitting and regulatory issues. Hobbling our authority, by requiring more without new resources is bad for the Bay Area, bad for our economy and will slow down the state's progress to achieve our mutual goals."

The four primary areas of concern by the Air District are:

- The preemption of local air district authority to regulate greenhouse gasses. California Air Districts have expertise in regulating GHG's and it will require all experienced agencies to effectively develop and enforce reduction efforts.
- Funding necessary, but not identified for additional air monitoring program and air quality plan efforts. Shifting resources to these potential new requirements would cause, cutbacks in other critical program areas still required by state and federal regulations. The Air District would have to sacrifice other programs to focus on these new objectives.
- Requirements for additional local air monitoring and community plans need to be initiated at the Air District level. Compliance efforts are more successful when initiated locally.
- The Air District continues to object to the CalEnviroScreen method to identify disadvantaged communities in the Bay Area. The Bay Area Air District went through an extensive 10-year process to map and identify disadvantaged communities and to discount that effort is detrimental to residents living in these communities who are disproportionately impacted by air pollution in the region.

The Bay Area Air District is responsible for permitting, regulating, inspecting and enforcing air quality regulations for stationary air pollution sources throughout the 9-county Bay Area region.

A focus on mobile sources of air pollution is essential for regional air district's and the state to achieve air pollution and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

The Air District continues to work with legislators to amend these bills to enable the agency to develop strategies to reach the greenhouse gas reduction targets outlined in AB 32.

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