



August 20, 2020

Samir Sheikh, Air Pollution Control Officer
Craig Pederson, Board Chairperson
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue
Fresno, CA 93720

RE: Support for selecting the City of Arvin as a Year 3 AB 617 Community

Honorable APCO Sheikh, Board Chair Pederson, and Governing Board Members:

Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) supports the nomination and selection of the City of Arvin as the Year 3 AB 617 Community in the San Joaquin Valley.

Kern COG is an association of city and county governments created to address regional transportation issues. Its member agencies include the County of Kern and the 11 incorporated cities within Kern County, including the City of Arvin. The Board of Directors includes the member agencies, and ex-officio members representing Caltrans and Golden Empire Transit District. As the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization and the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Kern County, Kern COG is responsible for developing and updating a variety of transportation plans and for allocating the federal and state funds to implement them. The Board and staff understand the connection between transportation and air quality. Efforts to reduce emissions in the transportation sector are identified in regional transportation plans and carried out through the Overall Work Program, including supporting our member agencies' efforts for reducing road congestion, supporting road improvements and active transportation measures and promoting the integration of zero emission vehicle technologies into existing and new markets for the movement of goods and people.

The AB 617 program was created for communities like the City of Arvin – severely impacted by poor air quality and meeting economic and CalEnviroScreen 3.0 measures. But more importantly, the City of Arvin continually demonstrates a desire and ability to take control of their destiny through local government leadership and citizen engagement. Kern COG applauds efforts to introduce zero emission transportation through the installation of charging stations, using PEVs in the light-duty fleet, and securing a Federal Low-No grant to purchase a Proterra Catalyst bus. Kern COG worked with partners to deploy MioCar, an electric carshare program in Arvin, Lamont and Wasco. The City of Arvin works not only to reduce transportation emissions, but also secured funding for an urban greening program – the only solution that cleans the air.

Kern COG has participated in community meetings in the AB 617 community of another member agency, the City of Shafter from the Kick-off meeting, to the development of a Community Emission Reduction Plan, to implementation of that CERP. Kern COG plans to devote staff time to AB 617 efforts in the City of Arvin. Thank you for your consideration. We urge you to move forward with the City of Arvin as the Year 3 AB 617 Community in the San Joaquin Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ahron Hakimi'.

Ahron Hakimi, Executive Director