

Central California Environmental Justice Collaborative/Mural Arts Institute
A program of the Arts Council of Kern

June 29, 2020

Division Chief Office of Community Air Protection

California Air Resources Board

1001 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue

Fresno, CA 93716

Attn: AB617, Letter of Support

Dear AB 617 Community Selection Committee,

The Central California Environmental Justice/Mural Arts Institute (*The Collaborative*) is pleased to support the nomination of the community of Arvin/Lamont South Kern Region as an AB617 community for the third year. Joining us in this recommendation: The San Joaquin Valley AB 617 Environmental Justice Steering Committee (SJV-AB617-EJ-SC) ranked Arvin-Lamont as the number one area in the rural category submitted to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD).

The nomination is a result of a thorough analysis of indicators that included population characteristics, regional and local air pollution; health data as well as the capacity from community-based organizations necessary to successfully engage with residents, the Air District and CARB in the AB617 CAPP process. Factors contributing to the pollution include large scale agricultural practices, concentrated warehouse distribution centers, and neighborhood oil and gas development.

The Collaborative in conjunction with the Arts Council of Kern works with local leadership and residents to address environmental justice concerns through the lens of artistic expression. Recent Collaborative projects in Arvin-Lamont: Arte de La Tercera Edad, DeColores: A Community Stories Project, the Nomadic Mural Project and the Arvin Quilt Project.

The South Kern Region at the southernmost tip of the San Joaquin Valley sits at the base of the Tehachapi mountain range creating a bowl that traps air and small particle pollution resulting in serious local air quality issues. *The Collaborative* is committed to improving public health and safety by supporting infrastructure improvements to reduce air pollution and help the region meet clean air mandates. *The Collaborative* will continue partnering with the community to identify opportunities to uncover solutions that develop and deploy strategies that work to reduce toxic air contaminants, fugitive dust, industrial pollution and the myriad issues directly related to regional and localized sources of pollution.

The Central California Environmental Justice/Mural Arts Institute is pleased to support effective reductions in fugitive dust to improve air quality in our Valley and move forward to attainment of state and federal air quality standards.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rosanna Esparza