

Monday, 29th 2020

Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment



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 Ave.
Fresno, CA 93716
Attn: AB617

Dear AB 617 Community Selection Committee,

CRPE- Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment is pleased to support the nomination of the community of Arvin/Lamont South Kern Region as an AB 617 community for year 3. CRPE has been working diligently with the local leadership to address environmental justice concerns, particularly through transportation modes that affect disadvantaged communities in Kern County.

The Arvin/Lamont South Kern Region is at the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley at the base of the Tehachapi mountain range, which effectively traps air pollution causing serious local air quality problems. CRPE is committed to improving public health and safety by constructing infrastructure improvements that reduce air pollution to help the region meet clean air mandates. CRPE is willing to partner with the community to identify opportunities to tackle and find localized solutions to develop and deploy strategies that work to reduce toxic air contaminants, fugitive dust, industrial pollution and many other issues caused by regional and localized sources of pollution.

We write this letter to express our full support for the communities of Arvin/Lamont South Kern Region to be selected for the Third-year implementation of the AB617 Community Air Protection Program. We are not alone in this recommendation. The San Joaquin Valley AB617 Environmental Justice Steering Committee (SVJ-AB617-EJ-SC) ranked Arvin-Lamont as the number one area in the Rural category in the nomination document they submitted to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SVJAPCD). This nomination was the 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 that is necessary to successfully engage with residents, the Air District and CARB in the AB617 CAPP process.

There is already vetted and reproducible data suggesting that the South Kern Region is highly affected by the regional air pollution as well as significant factors that contribute to the pollution such as local large scale agricultural practices, concentrated warehouse distribution centers, neighborhood oil and gas development as well as other factors.

CRPE is excited for the opportunity to progress our partnerships with the Air District and community to strategize effective reductions in fugitive dust that will improve air quality in our Valley and move toward attainment of state and federal air quality standards.

Sincerely,

CRPE, AB 617 Team.