









Los Angeles/Ventura Chapter



Riverside County Chapter



Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce



CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



May 3, 2021

The Honorable Mike McGuire
State Senate, District 2
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 5061
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 342 (Gonzales) – SCAQMD: Board Membership – OPPOSE

Dear Senator McGuire,

On behalf of Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed), an association of over 200 business organizations representing over 450,000 employers in LA County, **and the 97 organizations signing onto this letter**, we take an oppose position to Senate Bill 342. Your legislation that would expand the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Governing Board from 13 to 15 members by adding two board members from the Environmental Justice (EJ) community is unnecessary and diminishes local control and accountability.

In 2016, we opposed SB 1387 (De Leon), which also attempted to expand the SCAQMD Governing Board with additional Sacramento-based unelected appointments (then it was three additional board seats, now it would be two). Now, we oppose SB 342 for the following reasons:

Weakens local control, sets a dangerous precedent and takes regional authority away from local elected officials who are accountable to their constituents. SB 342 would authorize State elected officials to change the current SCAQMD board composition by adding two additional Sacramento appointee members. Doing so would give state-appointed non-elected representatives one-third of the seats on a regional board that is meant to represent local interests and is currently represented by city and county officials from four Southern California counties. The SCAQMD was established with local control in mind. The elected officials serving on the SCAQMD Board have a responsibility to their voters. This obligation will be weakened by adding more appointees who are not accountable to the public.

Attacks the competence of local leaders. By adding board seats, SB 342 implies that elected officials serving on the SCAQMD board are not effectively setting local policies, something that the current 13-member board has done for almost 50 years. This proposed legislative change ignores the fact that local elected officials possess a unique knowledge of the region and the local environment. Local elected officials who serve on this board live in the South Coast air basin and understand the impact their public policy decisions have on their local communities.

All municipally elected SCAQMD Board members are selected through a transparent process via the city selection process. The board is made up of mayors, board of supervisors and city council members all elected by voters. Southern California has a diverse pool of elected officials

eligible to represent the region on the SCAQMD Board under current law. The representatives includes 20 county supervisors and 848 mayors and city council members. Transferring additional regional authority to additional State appointees undermines the role and effectiveness of the region.

SCAQMD already has an Environmental Justice Advisory Group with a board member functioning as chair. In 1990s, the Board established the [Environmental Justice Advisory Group \(EJAG\)](#), which serves as an advisory group to the SCAMD. The EJAG’s mission is to advise and assist SCAQMD in protecting and improving public health of the District’s most impacted communities. In 2009, EJAG membership increase from 20 members to 30 members. The SCAQMD ensures that the EJAG includes an ethnically and geographically diverse membership. Members serve four year terms. A SCAQMD Board member chairs this committee and attends the meetings.

The SCAQMD has a well-documented history of engaging the community on environmental justice-related issues and concerns. The last thing the SCAQMD needs is for Sacramento to add two more appointed board seats to a 13-member Board, particularly individuals who would be unaccountable to local residents and business concerns and would dilute the influence of regional decision-makers.

For the reasons stated above, BizFed and the groups listed below opposed similar legislation in 2015 and we oppose SB 342 now.

We have always placed a great deal of value on your willingness to thoughtfully engage with BizFed and its member companies. Should you have any questions or need any further information about our opposition to SB 342, please contact Sarah Wiltfong at 310-213-8742 or sarah.wiltfong@bizfed.org.

Sincerely,

Beaumont Chamber of Commerce
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce
Building Industry Association of Los Angeles, Ventura Chapter
Building Industry Association of Orange County
Building Industry Association of Riverside
Building Industry Association of Southern California
Building Owners & Managers Association - California

Building Owners & Managers Association - Los Angeles

Business Resource Group
California African American Chamber of Commerce
California Asphalt Pavement Association
California Automotive Wholesalers' Association
California Building Industry Association
California Business Properties Association
California Chamber of Commerce
California Cleaners Association
California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association
California Delivery Association
California Food Producers
California Fuels and Convenience Alliance

California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
California Independent Petroleum
Association
California Manufacturers & Technology
Association
California Metals Coalition
California Railroad Industry
California Small Business Alliance
California Trucking Association
Carson Dominguez Employers Alliance
Central Valley Energy Coalition
Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce
Coalition of Energy Users
Coastal Energy Alliance
Construction Industry Air Quality Coalition
Corona Chamber of Commerce
El Segundo Chamber of Commerce
Employers Group
Engineering Contractors' Association
Fontana Chamber of Commerce
FuturePorts
Glendora Chamber of Commerce
Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of
Commerce
Greater High Desert Chamber of Commerce
Greater Los Angeles African American
Chamber
Greater Ontario Business Council
Harbor Association of Industry & Commerce
Harbor Trucking Association
Hemet San Jacinto Chamber of Commerce
Highland Chamber of Commerce
Industrial Association of Contra Costa
County
Industrial Environmental Association
Industry Business Council
Inland Action
Inland Empire Economic Partnership
International Council of Shopping Centers
International Warehouse and Logistics
Association
Kern Citizens for Energy
Kern County Taxpayers Association
L.A. South Chamber of Commerce

La Cañada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce
Latin Business Association
Latino Restaurant Association
Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Business Federation
(BizFed)
Majestic Realty Co.
Menifee Valley Chamber of Commerce
Moreno Valley Chamber of Commerce
Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce
NAIOP of California
National Federation of Independent
Business
Nisei Farmers League
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Taxpayers Association
Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce
Pomona Chamber of Commerce
Rancho Cucamonga Chamber of Commerce
Redlands Chamber of Commerce
Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce
Regional Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Pedro Chamber of Commerce
Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce
Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Association of Chambers of
Commerce
Southern California Leadership Council
Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
Upland Chamber of Commerce
Valley Industry and Commerce Association
Watson Land Company
West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
Western Agricultural Processors Association
Western Electrical Contractors Association
Western Independent Refiners Association
Western States Petroleum Association
Wilmington Chamber of Commerce