

AB 1330: Environmental Justice Act

Speaker of the Assembly John A. Pérez



In LA, the Latino working class communities of Boyle Heights and Vernon have received health alerts because of high levels of lead and arsenic from the battery recycler Exide. Exide has hundreds of violations over the past decade and operates on a temporary permit.



In the low-income community of Richmond, an explosion at the Chevron Refinery in 2012 sent 15,000 people to the hospital. Chevron is responsible for 12% of all air quality violations in the Bay Area.

Chronic corporate polluters are the #1 threat to healthy neighborhoods and a healthy economy



California, and the communities where we work, are suffering from the health impacts of chronic polluters. Dirty corporations like Chevron and Exide are draining millions from our economy and poisoning our health. We need to transform California's most vulnerable and polluted neighborhoods into healthy hoods: neighborhoods without rampantly polluting industries and full of community-led, green economic development. California can start building healthy hoods by supporting AB 1330: the Environmental Justice Act.

AB 1330 maps the way to transform toxic hotspots into healthy hoods and will increase California's long-term environmental and economic health. The bill has 4 main components.

1. IDENTIFY toxic hotspots

AB1330 will identify which communities that are toxic hotspots. CalEPA will use existing screening tools to identify communities burdened with excessive environmental and socioeconomic issues. This list of Green Zones will create the geographic foundation to better target beneficial policies and programs in the future.

2. INTERVENE in high levels of pollution

California cannot afford for major chronic polluters to continually violate existing environmental laws, repeatedly and with devastating impacts to communities across the state. AB1330 will intervene in habitual corporate polluting practices by strengthening current laws and increasing the consequences of breaking those laws in two ways.

Intervene in chronic corporate polluters

AB1330 will create a clear definition for “chronic violators” at the Air District and Department of Toxic Substance Control agencies to identify cases of chronic corporate pollution. Polluters meeting the criteria will be liable for increased fines and strong enforcement actions that can culminate in failure to renew or in worst case scenarios, revoke, permits.

Intervene in toxics by starting at the source

The best way to prevent pollution is reduce generation of toxics. AB1330 will direct the Department of Toxic Substances Control to develop a plan to reduce generation and disposal of hazardous waste under the guidance of a public advisory committee.

3. INVEST in overburdened communities

AB1330 redirects resources to toxic hotspot communities that are taking steps towards becoming healthy hoods. In does so in two ways.

Creates a dedicated source of funding for community solutions

AB1330 will re-direct 15% of all enforcement penalties from statewide environmental regulatory agencies under CalEPA, excluding local enforcement agencies such as air districts. These funds will be put into the already-existing CalEPA Environmental Justice Small Grants program, which will be re-tooled to better meet the current needs of our communities. AB 1330 will increase the maximum amount of allowable grants and expand eligible grant activities to include projects that help build healthy hoods, such as community gardens, water system upgrades, and affordable housing.

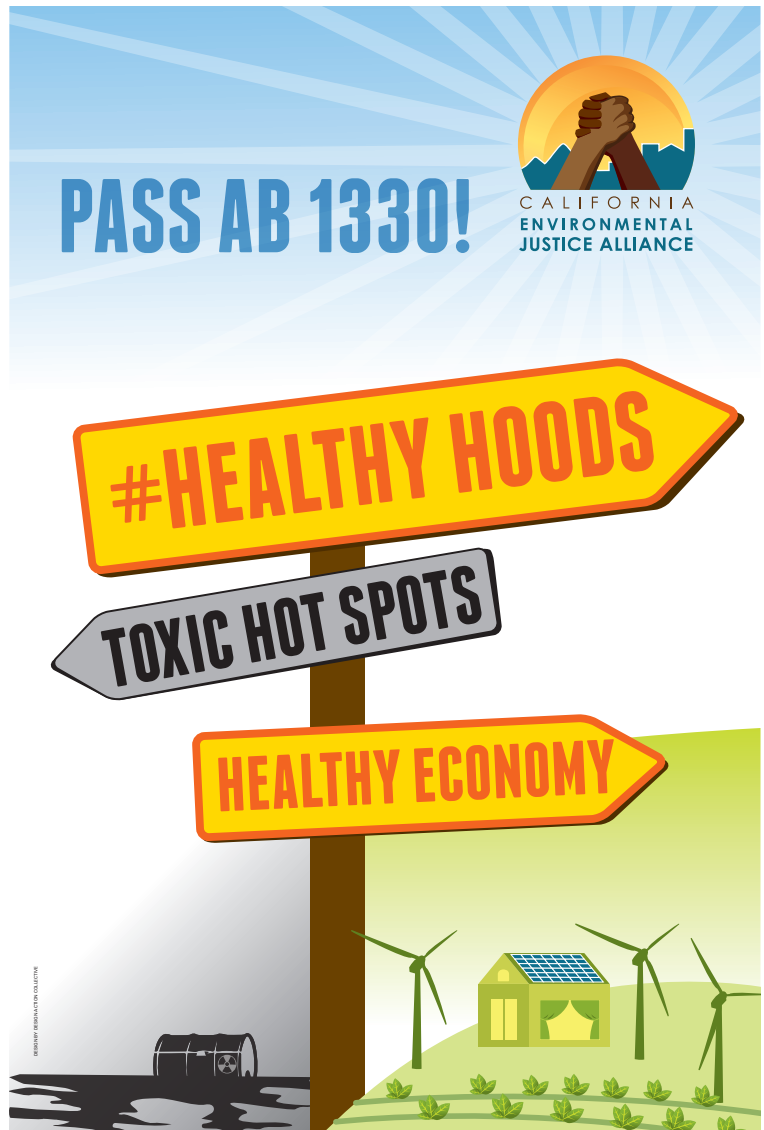
Embedding environmental justice criteria in environmental funding

AB 1330 requires CalEPA and the Natural Resources Agencies to positively factor in project benefits for overburdened communities when awarding discretionary grants.

#4. INVOLVE our communities to restore our democracy

AB1330 increases access to and transparency of environmental processes that are intended to protect our communities.

AB1330 guarantees that all people, regardless of whether they speak a language other than English, have equal public comment time, even if they need an interpreter.



AB1330 also improves systems for residents to access publicly available information by creating an online database of environmental compliance history.

CalEPA’s current databases are in disarray and extremely difficult to access.

