DATE

The Honorable Toni Atkins

Speaker, State Assembly

State Capitol, Room 201

Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Eduardo Garcia

State Capitol, Room 4162

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1071 (Atkins and Garcia), Environmental Justice SEPS Policy -- SUPPORT**

Dear Speaker Atkins and Assemblymember Garcia:

On behalf of the xxxx we are writing to express our strong support for AB 1071, the Environmental Justice Supplemental Environmental Projects Policy. DESCRIPTION OF YOUR ORG

AB 1071 will provide a mechanism to bring environmentally beneficial projects directly into low-income communities disproportionately burdened by pollution. Environmental justice communities across California are impacted first and worst by egregious violations of air, water and hazardous waste regulations. Currently, there is no way to ensure that when a violation occurs, the communities most impacted are able to receive direct benefits or repair the harm done from pollution.

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA) has a policy that allows agencies to authorize environmentally beneficial projects as part of enforcement actions or settlements. These projects are called “Supplemental Environmental Projects” (SEPS). The projects are a successful means of ensuring environmentally beneficial projects are implemented when a violation occurs.

Unfortunately, the existing policy is not set up to provide benefits directly to disadvantaged communities, and there is very little public information about how to engage the program. Additionally, the Boards, Departments, and Offices within Cal EPA underutilize this policy, thus limiting its effectiveness.

AB 1071 directs Cal EPA Boards, Departments, and Office too create a specific SEP program for environmental justice communities. It also requires a public request for projects and list of approved projects to published online annually. These measures will enable environmental justice communities to participate in the program and it will help ensure communities are able to receive benefits after violations occur that harm their health and environment.

As an organization invested in finding solutions for working class communities of color most impacted by pollution, we are pleased to offer our strong support of AB 1071.