

Senate Bill 1000

Planning for Healthy Communities Senator Connie M. Leyva (D-Chino)

SUMMARY

Senate Bill 1000 will require the development of an Environmental Justice (EJ) element or the inclusion of EJ goals, polices, and objectives in other elements for future General Plans. The bill will ensure local governments proactively plan for and address environmental justice when developing their long-term goals, policies, and vision for land use and any future growth.

BACKGROUND

A General Plan expresses a community's development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private. California state law requires each city and county to adopt a General Plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning" (Government Code §65300).

Specifically, state law requires a General Plan to address seven mandated elements — land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety — to the extent that the provisions are locally relevant. Accordingly, each city and county in California must prepare a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide its future.

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research is required to adopt and periodically revise the guidelines for the preparation and content of General Plans to assist local governments in meeting this responsibility. In 2003, the updated edition of the General Plan Guidelines (GPG) recommended that local governments integrate environmental justice into their General Plans.

Recently, the cities of Jurupa Valley and National City voluntarily adopted EJ elements into their General Plans to ensure that local land use decisions do not pose environmental risks to disadvantaged populations and to promote policies that improve the health and well-being of their most vulnerable and at-risk populations.

PROBLEM

Throughout California, disadvantaged communities bear a disproportionate burden of pollution and environmental hazards. Furthermore, inappropriate land use remains a leading cause of environmental inequities, from the lack of basic infrastructure in rural areas to the exposure of

residential and other sensitive land uses to toxins from industrial facilities. Consequently, residents in these communities often suffer higher rates of asthma, birth defects and cancer.

While the 2003 updated version of the General Plan Guidelines provided guidance for integrating EJ into city and county development, local governments and disadvantaged communities would be better served by a more comprehensive approach to planning for and addressing environmental justice issues.

SOLUTION

SB 1000 will improve local planning efforts to reduce disproportionate environmental and health impacts on California's most vulnerable residents by ensuring that local governments include an EJ element or EJ goals, polices, and objectives throughout in General Plans when they are updated. This EJ language will help cities and counties to reduce pollution exposure, and promote better food access, healthier homes, improved air quality, and physical activity in disadvantaged areas.

An EJ element or the inclusion of EJ goals, polices, and objectives allows local governments to identify disadvantaged and vulnerable areas within its jurisdiction and develop plans for addressing the needs of overburdened and under-resourced neighborhoods.

Senate Bill 1000 is not retroactive so it will only require local governments to add the EJ element or include it through other elements in the General Plan when they update two or more elements on or after January 1, 2018.

STATUS

Assembly Local Government Committee June 29

SUPPORT

Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (Sponsor)
California Environmental Justice Alliance (Sponsor)
Advancement Project
American Lung Association – California
American Planning Association – California Chapter
Asian Pacific Environmental Network
Breast Cancer Fund

California Alliance for Retired Americans
California Bicycle Coalition
California Coastal Protection Network
California League of Conservation Voters
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
CCoMpress
Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment
Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy
Chino Valley Democratic Club
Coalition For A Safe Environment
Coalition for Clean Air
Comité Civico Del Valle
Communities for a Better Environment
Communities for a New California
Community Action to Fight Asthma
Councilmember David Alvarez, City of San Diego
Environmental Health Coalition
Environmental Working Group
Fresno Barrios Unidos
Friends Committee on Legislation of California
Inland Congregations United for Change
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
Pacoima Beautiful
Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles
PODER!
Regional Asthma Management & Prevention
Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Sierra Club California
SoCal CAN
Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education
The Greenlining Institute
The Women’s Foundation of California
Trust for Public Land



CONTACT

Phillip Vander Klay, (916) 651-4020
Office of Senator Connie M. Leyva
State Capitol, Room 4061
Phillip.Vanderklay@sen.ca.gov