



For Latino communities living in areas with high air pollution, the cap-and-trade package may not do enough

[A Martínez and Take Two Staff | Take Two®](#) | July 27, 2017

On Wednesday, Governor Jerry Brown signed the final bill in the cap-and-trade package. This measure would, among other things, empower the California Air Board to identify and monitor areas with high levels of air pollution.

Fifteen miles south, just northwest of Long Beach, is the city of Wilmington, a community sandwiched between several oil refineries. As of 2015, the city is majority Latino, and it's certainly a contender to be one of those critical areas that the assembly bill would monitor.

A recent study by the Legislative Latino Caucus found that 44% of California's Latino population live in areas with considerable amounts of air pollution. According to activists and community organizers, Wilmington is one of these areas, and they've noticed that the city is plagued by health problems.

"One of our doctors actually named that area the 'diesel death zone' because of what he was seeing in his emergency room," said Martha Dina Argüello in an interview with Take Two host A Martínez. "Folks are experiencing headaches, and nausea, and bloody noses."

Argüello is the executive director of Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles, and she has spent time on the ground in Wilmington, working with local organizations and helping educate the people who live there on the public health risks of living so close to a refinery. She absolutely supports attempts to monitor and control air pollution, but for her, the latest assembly bill isn't enough.

"The monitoring that is included in the bill, Well, that's very good," said Argüello. "And for for those of us who work on policy in Sacramento, that data is important. But we can't sacrifice the lungs of people on the ground so we can have more data. We need to do both."