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## **Environmental Justice Bills Promise Improvements in Low-Income Communities & Communities of Color**

*CEJA's 2019 Environmental Justice Legislative Agenda Features Bills to Advance  
Energy Efficiency, Transportation Electrification, & Safe Affordable Drinking Water*

**Sacramento, CA | April 4, 2019** — The California Environmental Justice Alliance's Environmental Justice Legislative Agenda for 2019 features 16 bills that will address energy, climate, air quality, transportation, and drinking water and infrastructure improvements. From anti-displacement protections in energy efficiency programs to increasing zero emissions vehicles, these bills keep equity at the center of California's environmental policies by bringing much needed benefits directly to disadvantaged communities.

**Read more about our priority bills from our member and partners below and visit CEJA's website to see our full [2019 Environmental Justice Legislative Agenda](#).**

California has the opportunity to expand anti-displacement protections for state energy efficiency programs serving low-income customers. AB 1232 guides agencies in data collection to ensure enforceability and to better penetrate the unregulated affordable housing market. Sponsored by the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, the bill would also increase coordination and collaboration between the Low Income Weatherization Program and public health programs addressing health issues in homes of vulnerable residents.

"AB 1232 by Assemblymember Todd Gloria ensures our state's renewable energy economy includes anti-displacement protections and stronger links to public health so those hit hardest by pollution and poverty are a central part of the transformation towards a clean and equitable future for California's residents, homes, and state climate goals."

— Shina Robinson, Local Policy Associate, [Asian Pacific Environmental Network](#)

Air pollution along transit corridors has a direct health impact on communities along those routes, which are predominantly low-income communities and communities of color. AB 1411 would mitigate this impact by deploying zero-emission medium and heavy duty vehicles and off-road vehicles by 2030. This bill would require a collection of agencies to develop an integrated action plan for sustainable freight, which would identify strategies and prioritize actions that significantly reduce air pollution in low-income communities.

"AB 1411 has the potential to deploy 200,000 zero emission medium and heavy duty vehicles, off-road vehicles and equipment, and needed infrastructure by 2030. We cannot continue to allow diesel emissions to harm the health of residents across the Inland Empire. Assemblymember Reyes' bill will help to improve the quality of life for frontline communities."

— Allen Hernandez, Executive Director, [Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice](#)

Environmental justice communities have demanded increased accountability from the Department of Toxic Substances Control on permitting decisions related to hazardous waste facilities, clean up sites, and

enforcement. AB 1357 seeks to improve DTSC's lack of transparency to ensure the communities most impacted by toxic contamination are heard in the agency's decision making processes.

"AB 1357 by Assemblymember Bill Quirk requires the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to hold quarterly public meetings to increase transparency and accountability for the department's permitting, site clean-up, and enforcement activities. DTSC has systematically made decisions without addressing the needs of communities most impacted by its decisions. AB 1357 provides more opportunities for residents to advocate for the health and well-being of their communities."

— Ingrid Brostrom, Assistant Director, [Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment](#)

California needs a reliable and ongoing funding source to ensure all Californians have access to safe, affordable drinking water. Without long-term funding support, water treatment and new clean water sources for small, rural and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged communities is cost-prohibitive. AB 217 and SB 200 would establish the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund.

"We have a drinking water crisis in California. More than one million people do not have access to safe, affordable drinking water. While it should be no surprise, it is still disheartening that low-income communities of color are most impacted by contaminated water. Securing an ongoing and reliable funding source is fundamental to confronting this human and civil rights emergency. Two bills — SB 200 by Senator Bill Monning and AB 217 by Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia — are working their way through the legislature, and Gov. Gavin Newsom has offered strong support for a safe, affordable drinking water fund."

— Phoebe Seaton, Co-Director, [Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability](#)

Our state's most vulnerable communities need emergency planning to be responsive since lack of cultural competence and language accessibility can oftentimes be a barrier to effective communication. SB 160 would enhance community engagement by integrating interpreters and translators and incorporating outreach to diverse population groups during emergency planning processes.

"As fellows in the Women's Policy Institute of the Women's Foundation of California and representing environmental justice organizations, we are proud to sponsor SB 160 and work closely with Senator Jackson in ensuring our state's culturally diverse communities are well equipped during emergencies. Addressing the need for cultural competency in emergency planning is a crucial step in safeguarding all Californians from the increasing threat of disasters fueled by climate change."

— Lucia Marquez, Community Organizer, [Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy](#)

**Visit our website to read CEJA's full [2019 Environmental Justice Legislative Agenda](#).**

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[California Environmental Justice Alliance](#) is a statewide coalition of grassroots, environmental justice organizations building a movement among low-income communities and communities of color most impacted by environmental issues to demand change. We unite the powerful local organizing of our members in the communities most impacted by environmental hazards – low-income communities and communities of color – to create comprehensive opportunities for change at a statewide level. We build the power of communities across California to create policies that will alleviate poverty and pollution. [www.caleja.org](http://www.caleja.org)