

JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

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INFORMATIONAL HEARING:

LOCAL ACTIONS TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY

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1:30PM

STATE CAPITOL ROOM 126

Local actions are essential to helping California reach our ambitious climate goals. Local governments have broad jurisdiction and unique authorities to facilitate local development and investments in a manner that reduces emissions while providing important economic benefits. A significant number of local governments have conducted emissions inventories and created plans to facilitate emissions reductions, and all metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) have adopted at least one sustainable community strategy (SCS). In addition to state-level resources like CoolCalifornia.org and the recently updated General Plan Guidelines from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), there are several funding streams that either directly or indirectly support local government efforts to reduce emissions: the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, the Volkswagen settlement funding, and SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017). These funding streams are estimated to generate at least \$40 billion toward investments in local projects over the next ten years.

With recent changes in state law and the codification of California's ambitious 2030 greenhouse gas emissions target, the goal of this hearing is to understand whether local and regional governments have the tools and resources needed to reduce emissions.

CURRENT INITIATIVES AND TRENDS

Climate action plans help local, state, or federal agencies outline specific actions that will be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These planning documents usually include or reference greenhouse gas inventories conducted by the agency. Some examples of strategies that could be included in a climate action plan to help local governments reduce emissions:

- Direct local investment to energy efficiency upgrades and urban forestry projects
- Facilitate the development of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure
- Install smart meters on homes and commercial buildings
- Update building codes and standards to increase energy efficiency

In recognition of the ambitious emissions reductions needed to reach the 2030 climate goals, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) recommends in the draft 2030 Target Scoping Plan that local governments set targets of no more than six metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent per capita by 2030, which would be consistent with the statewide goal for 2030 as well as the international goal outlined in the Under 2 MOU. According to a 2016 OPR report, 60 percent of California cities and 70 percent of California counties have completed a greenhouse gas emissions inventory, and 42 percent of local governments have completed some form of climate, energy, or sustainability plan that directly addresses greenhouse gas emissions. The Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative estimated the cumulative emissions reductions possible from local government plans could be more than 45 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent each year by 2020 and 83 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent each year by 2050. To put those numbers in context, ARB estimates in the Draft 2030 Target Scoping Plan that California needs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a total of 681 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent between 2021 and 2030 if we are to meet the target set by SB 32 (Chapter 249, Statutes of 2016).

OPR's recently updated General Plan Guidelines outlines the role of climate change in local planning efforts. OPR emphasizes the authority of local governments decisions regarding industrial permitting, land use and transportation plans, zoning, building codes and other standards, and municipal operations. Local governments must enforce the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which is critical for ensuring any significant changes in greenhouse gas emissions attributable to any plan or project are identified and addressed. General plans are also required to include a safety element, which is intended to address the short-term and long-term risks associated with climate change. SB 379 (Chapter 608, Statutes of 2015) now requires local governments to conduct climate change vulnerability assessments as a part of the safety element, including measures to address any identified vulnerabilities and a comprehensive hazard mitigation and emergency response strategy.

SB 1000 (Chapter 587, Statutes of 2016) now requires local jurisdictions that have disadvantaged communities according to CalEnviroScreen to incorporate environmental justice into their general plans, either in a separate additional element to the general plan or by integrated environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives throughout the existing elements of the general plan. This new requirement applies to all local jurisdictions that update two or more elements on or after January 1, 2018. According to OPR's General Plan Guidelines, some potential policies and zoning changes included to meet this new requirement include:

- a) Methods for equitable distribution of new public facilities and services;
- b) Methods to consider siting of polluting facilities that seek to minimize over-concentration of health and safety hazards;
- c) Methods for siting new schools and residential dwellings to avoid proximity to industrial areas; and
- d) Methods for promoting livable communities to maximize transit-oriented development so residents minimize traffic and air pollution impacts.

Potential questions for the panel:

- a) How much have local governments contributed to the reduction in statewide greenhouse gas emissions achieved to-date?

- b) What obstacles or best practices have emerged in the development or implementation of local resiliency, adaptation, or mitigation efforts?
- c) How can local governments and communities leverage the new requirements of SB 379 and SB 1000 to identify and address the impacts of climate change, particularly for vulnerable communities?

SB 375 IMPLEMENTATION

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (Chapter 728, Statutes of 2008), also known as SB 375, supports California's climate goals through regional coordination of transportation and land use planning. This bill recognized the critical role of local governments in reducing emissions by improving land use and transportation policy to reduce vehicle miles traveled by residents.

Under SB 375, ARB sets greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets from passenger vehicle use. The first targets were adopted in 2010. Each of California's MPOs must prepare a SCS that includes land use, housing, and transportation strategies that – if implemented – will allow the region to meet the greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. The goal of the SCS process is to incentivize dense, compact, mixed-use development along transportation corridors with the desired outcome of regionally planned, mixed-use developments that encourage affordable housing and reduce vehicle miles traveled. If the SCS will not meet the targets, an MPO must submit an alternative planning strategy to meet the targets. ARB is responsible for reviewing and accepting SCSs. Approved SCSs inform the regional transportation plan (RTP), which makes projects eligible for state and federal funding.

SB 375 does not change the exclusive authority local governments have over land use decisions. SCSs are implemented when local governments shift their plans and investments to take advantage of the funding and other incentives offered to projects that align with the regional strategy. Advocacy groups have identified several best practices for SCS development and implementation; these strategies include robust public engagement, conducting social equity analyses, including the needs of rural communities, strategically investing to address housing and environmental goals, and aligning local land use plans with the regional strategy. However, advocates also note that not all SCSs have fully explored the most ambitious emissions reduction scenario possible or prioritized funding toward high-density or alternative transportation projects, resulting in the continued incorporation and funding of road-widening or other projects that some believe are contrary to the goals of SB 375.

ARB is currently updating consulting stakeholders on another target update. In recognition of the shift in state resources available for transportation projects and the essential role local land use projects would play in helping the state reach the climate goals, ARB staff is currently proposing targets that, if realized, would contribute a reduction in 10 million metric tons of carbon dioxide per year by 2035. However, the aggregate per capita reduction in greenhouse gas emissions achieved with the proposed targets would fall at 19.9 percent, which is much less than the 25 percent reduction called for in the current draft 2030 Target Scoping Plan.

MPO	2035 SCS Targets			
	2010 Target Adopted by ARB	Current SCS Performance	MPO Recommended Target	CARB Proposed Target
MTC/ABAG	-15%	-16%	-18%	-19%
SACOG	-16%	-16%	-18%	-19%
SANDAG	-13%	-18%	-18%	-21%
SCAG	-13%	-18%	-18%	-21%
Fresno COG	-10%	-10%	-13%	-13%
Kern COG		-13%	-13%	-15%
Kings CAG		-12%	-12%	-13%
Madera CTC		-15%	-15 to -20%	-16%
Merced CAG		-12.7%	-12.7%	-14%
San Joaquin COG		-14%	-14 to -15%	-16%
Stanislaus COG		-14%	-14 to -15%	-16%
Tulare CAG		-15%	-15 to -16%	-16%
AMBAG	-5%	-6%	-6%	-6%
Butte CAG	1%	-7%	-7%	-7%
San Luis Obispo COG	-8%	-10.9%	-8%	-11%
Santa Barbara CAG	0%	-15%	-17%	-17%
Shasta RTA	0%	-0.5%	-3.5%	-4%
Tahoe MPO	-5%	-5%	-5%	-5%

Source: https://arb.ca.gov/cc/sb375/staff_report_sb375_target_update_june_full_report.pdf

Potential questions for the panel:

- a) Have regions been on track to meet the SB 375 goals set in 2010?
- b) What obstacles or strategies have come forward in development or implementation of SCSs?
- c) What factors have gone in to the development of the new proposed targets for regions?
- d) The proposed targets fall short of the emissions reductions needed to reach the 2030 target. What measures can state or local governments do to further reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions?
- e) How will implementation of SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017), the Volkswagen settlement funding, and other changes in state or federal funding affect implementation of SB 375?