

Steering Committee



Equitable Investment and Justice40

AB 2419 (Bryan), the California Justice40 Act, would have aligned the state with the Justice40 Initiative.

Justice40 is a Federal effort established by an Executive Order issued by President Biden that set a goal to deliver at least 40 percent of the overall benefits from Federal investments in climate, infrastructure, and clean energy to disadvantaged communities.

California currently lacks a comprehensive equity framework for investments. The state has a wide range of inconsistent, imprecise, and misaligned terms, definitions, and frameworks used to identify “disadvantaged communities” and areas targeted for investment (*Disadvantaged Communities Nomenclature Within the State of California: Findings and Conclusions*, Department of Water Resources)

Challenges in implementation

The state faces two connected challenges:

- 1) disadvantaged and historically under-resourced communities often **lack the capacity** to access Federal funds, and
- 2) the **state does not have a comprehensive equity framework** to ensure investments are used to benefit the communities most in need.

If we focus on building quickly without a simultaneous commitment to equity, we run the risk of:

- **Continuing the legacy of inequitable infrastructure development and disinvestment** that leave the most disadvantaged communities behind;
- **Ineffectively deploying investments** by overlooking projects that could have the greatest impact; and
- Leaving the state and local communities **less competitive for Federal funding** opportunities.

Recommendations

Commit to equity as a driving feature of climate and infrastructure investments through:

1) Dedicated state resources and capacity

- Office of Justice40
- Staff committed to equity in implementation

2) Community accountability and oversight

- Publicly available data on investments
- Justice40 Advisory Committee

3) Equity investment framework

- Take the next step after SB 150 (Durazo)
- Unified framework across *all* climate and infrastructure investments