



September 19, 2025

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000

Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: VETO SB 34 (Richardson) Air Pollution: South Coast Air Quality Management

District: Mobile Sources, Public Seaports

As Amended July 16, 2025; Enrolled September 17, 2025

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to express our continued strong opposition to SB 34 (Richardson) — a bill that would undermine the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) authority to address harmful air pollution from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach—the largest fixed sources of air pollution in the region and major contributors to smog in one of the most air-polluted areas in the nation.

Air pollution has spurred a public health and affordability crisis throughout the state. This pollution raises the risk of serious health problems, including asthma, damage to lungs and airways, heart attacks, cancer, and even early death. These health impacts are costing families, driving up spending on healthcare and pricey prescription respiratory medicines, and forcing many residents to miss days of work and school as a result of pollution-triggered illnesses. Last year, the average retail price of a common asthma inhaler, albuterol, was \$98. In 2022, Californians had 14,118 asthma hospitalizations and 125,113 emergency room visits for asthma, with yearly asthma costs estimated at \$13 billion.

SB 34 does more harm than good and must be stopped for the following key reasons:

- **SB 34 Creates Unnecessary Hurdles.** The bill is overly broad, creating hurdles that weaken the air district's ability to protect 17 million residents in the South Coast Air Basin by blaming any regulatory action for all slow downs at the ports, even without evidence.
- **SB 34 Impedes Local Control.** The bill would discourage the air district from developing a comprehensive regulatory strategy for port-attributed

emissions—thwarting the open and transparent rulemaking process that currently

extremely important engine for our local economy. Fishing, hiking,

This is because roadless areas protect watersheds that provide

inhabitants of our area for gen-

The Inyo

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Our legacy to future generations

"The Last Generation" — this is what many of the teenagers/ young adults consider themselves to be. The hopelessness and despair of the young as they look towards their future has led to an enormous rise in the rates of depression and suicide in this age group. They have grown up in a time of enormous turmoil and uncertainty, the rise of authoritarianism and the abridgement of the rights of all people. But most importantly they are witnessing the potential demise of a planet that is increasingly unsustainable, leading them to a sense that the future, their future, is nonexistent.

Is this to be our legacy to them? We must not let it be — regardless of the factors contributing to the manifestly changing climate, we must do all that we can to protect and indeed enrich our planet so that a future is possible.

For our crucial role in the stewardship of our planet, it is vital to understand the elegant, intricate, and vital connections within the magnificent web of life in which we live. The ocean and the life within it is essential to the balance that makes all life on earth possible. Whales and other cetaceans (e.g. dolphins and porpoises) are marine mammals that serve as "keystone" species in the ocean, essential for the survival and wellbeing of the ocean and all its beings.

Aside from the pleasure of simply seeing these majestic sentient beings, whales provide essential nutrients for other life, from phytoplankton to fish. Their excretions, spread across the oceans as they travel over long distances, "fertilize" areas to enable other species to thrive. Phytoplankton generate more than half the world's oxygen, and capture CO₂, playing an enormous role in supporting the earth's atmosphere. Whales themselves are "carbon sinks," fostering carbon sequestration.

The importance of these marine mammals to the wellbeing of the planet cannot be understated. Sadly, landmark legislation designed to protect marine mammals in the United States is now at risk. For more than 50 years the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act has balanced economic benefits of human uses in our ocean with protections allowing marine mammals to recover from decades of human impacts. A recent bill introduced in Congress (House) puts this act and the protection it offers to these sentient animals, the health of our ocean, and the legacy of hope we can offer young people, at serious risk.

It is crucial that the Marine Mammal Protection Act not be compromised or repealed. Please let Rep. Kevin Kiley and our senators know that this act must be protected at all costs — the failure to do so would bring

devastation to these essential beings and the ocean, the fisheries and the planet. Without healthy marine mammals, there will be no legacy for future generations. It is up to us to give those who follow us hope for a future, not the despair that leads so many to suicide.

Kiley can be reached online or by phone in Washington D.C. at (202) 225-2523 or his Rocklin office at (916) 724-2575. Sen. Alex Padilla can be contacted at (202) 224-3553, and Senator Adam Schiff can be reached at (202) 224-3841. Both can be reached online as well.

Jeanette Schneider
PhD MD/Bishop

9/11: 24 years later, what does it mean?

At the end of the day, I was at Bishop Welding. I had just renewed Bob's registration at the DMV. Bob is the name of my thirty-year old Dodge van. Depending on my level of appreciation, the acronym stands for either Bucket of Bolts or Beast of Burden. Jared did a fine job of welding up a bracket to repair my never-ending project. That was when my friend, Katie, my Mammoth Orthopedic Institute's Angel that keeps me moving, invited me to a Bishop event.

The 9/11 Memorial at the "Y." I asked, "At the YMCA?" but that was not as embarrassing as trying to find the entrance to the County Fairgrounds. If you are not a local, there is no way to know how to get in. That skinny sign in front of the sporting goods store is easily missed!

Never to say never, I asked for directions. I turned onto and off Sierra, parked in the lot, got changed, went through the gate and leapt up the stadium's ramp. There I stood, prepared I thought, amidst firemen and women, peace keepers, and the folk who keep this 9/11 event alive.

LETTERS AND TOP OF T

- Limit for letters is 500 words; for Top of the Morning, 1,000 words.
- Submission must be original and not published in any other print and/or online media. We will not print letters also submitted to other local media for publication.
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Please meet **Cass!**

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SB 34 Limits the Region's Ability to Reach Attainment of Air Quality Standards.

The Air District cannot afford to lose any tool to reduce emissions if it has any hope of reaching attainment of federal and state air quality standards. Continued non-attainment risks losing billions in federal highway dollars—a threat the current administration has made in the past.

These limitations come at the worst possible time. Just as the Trump Administration attacks California's clean vehicle standards, SB 34 will set limits on the local air regulator responsible for cleaning our air at a time when it must use every tool available to address the air quality and public health crisis brought on by port pollution.

SB 34 would set a dangerous precedent eroding SCAQMD's authority and paving the way for similar attacks on air districts across the state, eroding California's long-standing system for regulating air pollution and improving air quality throughout the unique air basins in our state. These concerns are real and have led the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and the Bay Area Air District to oppose this bill.

For these reasons we urge your **VETO** on SB 34. Please reach out to Mark Fenstermaker (contract lobbyist for Earthjustice) at mark@pacificpolicygroup.com for any questions.

Sincerely,

Theral Golden
West Long Beach Association

Katelyn Roedner Sutter
Environmental Defense Fund

Eli Lipmen
Move LA

Caroline Bonfield
Ocean Conservancy

Melissa Romero
California Environmental Voters

Jakob Evans

Sierra Club California

Maurissa Brown
The Greenlining Institute

Michele Canales
Union of Concerned Scientists

Marven Norman
Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice

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Cristhian Tapia-Delgado
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Will Barrett
American Lung Association

Dori Chandler
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Paola Vargas
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