



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE



CEJA ACTION
A PROJECT OF TIDES ADVOCACY

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SCORECARD 2019



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CHAMPIONS

Environmental Justice Champions do more than just align with the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA)'s positions on bills. These individuals go above and beyond to embody our Principles of Environmental Justice to build a strong relationship with environmental justice communities and put forth their political capital to advance environmental justice solutions. The individuals below were nominated by CEJA members and partners as legislators who have earned the title of "Environmental Justice Champions" in 2019. We look forward to continuing to work with them in 2020!

- ▶ **Senator Connie Leyva** was elected to the California Senate in 2014. In 2019, Senator Leyva introduced SB 210 to implement smog checks for heavy duty trucks, a measure that will significantly benefit communities living and working near transportation corridors. She was also one of very few Senators who voted no on SB 25 (Caballero), a bill CEJA opposed because it would significantly weaken the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). She has publicly supported community initiatives, recently writing an op-ed with Assemblymember Reyes expressing their opposition to a new warehouse proposed in an environmental justice community that would bring additional pollution. By proactively fighting for improved health in environmental justice communities and using her political capital to help advance environmental justice issues, Senator Leyva has earned the title of CEJA Environmental Justice Champion for 2019.
- ▶ **Assemblymember Monique Limón** was elected to the California Assembly in 2016. In 2019, Assemblymember Limón authored AB 1057 to rescope the mission and work of the California Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources to focus on protecting public health and our climate. As a member of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, Assemblymember Limón has been a consistent and vocal defender of environmental justice communities. Her steadfast positions on environmental issues has earned Assemblymember Limón the title of CEJA Environmental Justice Champion for 2019.
- ▶ **Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi** was elected to the California Assembly in 2012. In 2019, Assemblymember Muratsuchi partnered with environmental justice advocates to introduce several bills on oil extraction and pesticide use in California. He introduced AB 342, which passed this year to protect public lands from oil extraction. He also introduced

AB 345, which would have established a 2,500 foot health and safety setback policy for oil and gas extraction. When AB 1299 (Salas) threatened monitoring requirements for refineries in rural areas, Assemblymember Muratsuchi went on the record with reporters opposing the bill - a move that helped stop a bill the CEJA and our allies were opposing. As a member of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, Assemblymember Muratsuchi has been a consistent and vocal defender of environmental justice communities. By partnering with environmental justice communities on legislation to protect communities and by being willing to put his political capital to use to advance our issues, Assemblymember Muratsuchi has earned the title of CEJA Environmental Justice Champion for 2019.

- ▶ **Assemblymember Eloise Gómez Reyes** was elected to the California Assembly in 2016. In 2019, Assemblymember Reyes authored AB 1411 to increase the number of electric trucks with the goal of improving community health near transportation corridors. She has also publicly supported community initiatives, showing up at community meetings on land use and air district decisions, as well as writing an op-ed with Senator Leyva expressing their opposition to a new warehouse proposed for an environmental justice community. Assemblymember Reyes has always been accessible to environmental justice groups, and has proven to care deeply about protecting the health and safety of EJ communities. She has not hesitated to use her political capital to help advance the issues of those most impacted by environmental harms and lifting their priorities. As a consistent and strong defender of environmental justice communities, Assemblymember Reyes has earned the title of CEJA Environmental Justice Champion for 2019.

BUILDING NEW RELATIONSHIPS

2019 saw the swearing in of a new Governor, 16 new legislators, and even a new Democrat, when Assemblymember Brian Maienschein switched parties earlier this year. CEJA and our partner and member organizations have focused on maintaining and strengthening relationships with established legislative allies while also building new relationships to cultivate new environmental justice champions.

2019 FIRST-YEAR LEGISLATOR SCORES		
MEMBER	DISTRICT	SCORE
Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan	D - San Ramon	97%
Assemblymember Tasha Boerner Horvath	D - Carlsbad	91%
Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris	D - Irvine	74%
Assemblymember James Ramos	D - Rancho Cucamonga	69%
Assemblymember Robert Rivas	D - Hollister	100%
Assemblymember Christy Smith	D - Santa Clarita	91%
Assemblymember Buffy Wicks	D - Oakland	100%+
Senator Bob Archuleta	D - Norwalk	87%
Senator Andreas Borgeas	R - Oakdale	23%
Senator Anna Caballero	D - Merced	82%
Senator Maria Elena Durazo	D - Los Angeles	87%
Senator Lena Gonzalez	D - Long Beach	100%
Senator Shannon Grove	R - Yucca Valley	25%
Senator Melissa Hurtado	D - Fresno	68%
Senator Susan Rubio	D - West Covina	86%
Senator Thomas Umberg	D - Santa Ana	79%



For the most part, Democratic first-year legislators had a very strong first year on environmental justice issues. A standout example is Assemblymember Robert Rivas, who had a strong voting record and also authored AB 1628 - legislation sponsored by CEJA. Senator Lena Gonzalez also started her term strong by participating in a community-led environmental justice tour organized by Communities for a Better Environment to better understand environmental justice issues in her district. Senator Maria Elena Durazo listened to concerns that have been long-expressed by farmworkers and communities and took much-needed leadership by introducing a bill to ban chlorpyrifos, a pesticide linked to brain-damage in childhood development. Many first-year legislators showed strong potential in 2019 to be EJ leaders, and we look forward to working with them as they continue to grow into environmental justice champions in the future.

We appreciate that Senator Hurtado authored SB 351, sponsored by Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, which expanded the authority of the Strategic Growth Council to award Transformative Climate Communities implementation grants to projects located in both incorporated and unincorporated communities. However, Senator Hurtado also co-authored AB 1299 (Salas), which would have eliminated refinery air monitoring requirements for small oil refineries in rural areas and led to adverse health impacts from increased air pollution. AB 1299 was strongly opposed by residents in communities that would have been impacted by worsening air quality as a result of that proposed exemption. We are hopeful that Senator Hurtado will shift course in her second year and work with environmental justice communities in her district to move legislation to improve the health and safety of residents in close proximity to fossil fuel operations and advance a just transition away from fossil fuels.



GOVERNOR NEWSOM'S FIRST YEAR

Governor Gavin Newsom started his first year off strong by taking a marked stance on and making concerted efforts to bring safe and affordable drinking water to communities that for too long have been deprived of this basic human right. Largely due to his focus and leadership on this issue, legislation on safe and affordable drinking water (SB 200 by Senator Monning) was passed this year, after failing to move forward in previous years.

Overall, Governor Newsom scored 100% on his legislative performance, signing all 11 of the bills on this Scorecard that made it to his desk in 2019. He took strong executive action against chlorpyrifos, a harmful pesticide linked to brain damage and other health effects. He also supported legislation to rename the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources and to pivot

its focus away from maximum extraction of fossil fuels and toward protecting public health and climate. His Administration ended 2019 with an announcement of several critical actions on oil and gas, including a ban on certain types of oil extraction, further review of new extraction permits, and a rulemaking process on further measures to address public health concerns. His Administration has also embarked upon ambitious studies to explore how to achieve carbon neutrality in California. We commend Governor Newsom for taking these necessary first steps to both protect the health and safety of communities impacted by fossil fuel operations and to transition our state away from fossil fuels.

While Governor Newsom had a strong first year, we note that there is additional room for the Governor to grow in embodying the Principles of



Environmental Justice. Governor Newsom has been inaccessible to CEJA and our members, and has failed to consult environmental justice groups before key actions and appointments. A key example of this was his July 2019 visit to the Chevron oil spill in Kern County, where he met with industry representatives, but not with impacted community representatives. Another example lies in his appointments to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, two appointments with significant impact on environmental justice communities that were decided without any consultation of environmental justice groups. After rescinding an appointment to the SCAQMD, environmental justice communities are still waiting for appointment of a representative that will prioritize protecting air quality and public health. The Governor also vetoed SB 1 (Atkins), a bill that would have protected California from environmental policy rollbacks at the federal level.

Moving forward, CEJA looks forward to building a closer partnership with the Governor and his staff to allow us to work together toward our shared goals of environmental stewardship and social justice. Specifically, we will be looking for the Governor to lead boldly and courageously on oil and gas in 2020, in a manner that will protect frontline communities and will move our state toward a just transition from fossil fuels. We are hopeful for ample opportunities for meaningful community engagement to ensure that his actions protect frontline communities from the harmful effects of the fossil fuel industry. We also hope for an opportunity to meet with the Governor directly to build relationships and inform him about the needs of and our vision for our communities. Working together, we are convinced we can make California a leader on environmental justice.

PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CHAMPIONS

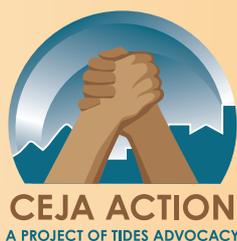
One purpose of this Scorecard is to identify environmental justice champions: legislators who are proactive and meaningful partners for CEJA and our members, and are using their political capital to advance environmental justice priorities. Below are several principles that accurately embody the characteristics and actions of environmental justice champions:

- ▶ **Prioritize and value prevention, human health, and improved quality of life:** human health and well-being must be given full weight in decisions, and not overlooked in favor of business interest or “cost effectiveness.”
- ▶ **Do no harm:** decisions must not do further harm to environmental justice communities.
- ▶ **Prioritize environmental justice communities:** decisions must confront the historic legacy and ongoing disproportionate siting of polluting sources in environmental justice communities, as well as the trend of disinvestment in those neighborhoods. Programs and investments should prioritize environmental justice communities.
- ▶ **Meaningful community engagement:** decisions must be informed by residents of environmental justice communities, which means decision-makers should be proactive and culturally relevant in soliciting input and ideas on actions to improve health, responsive to community concerns, and transparent in their work to ensure continued engagement and accountability.
- ▶ **Be proactive:** decision-makers should not wait for communities to approach them with solutions, but proactively reach out to impacted community groups for ideas and feedback.
- ▶ **Take an intersectional approach:** environmental justice communities are systematically disinvested in economically and impacted by patriarchy, racism, and state violence. To be more inclusive, we must partner to advance intersectional solutions that creatively address the multiple crises Californians are facing.
- ▶ **Be responsive:** decision-makers have a responsibility to be responsive and accountable to community concerns when addressed. Elected officials should make follow-up and continued discussion on issues a priority, and should keep working on an issue until it is fully resolved.
- ▶ **Respect community expertise:** environmental justice communities are experts in what is happening in their communities, and know the solutions that they want to see. Too often, however, community voices are ignored or invalidated which prevents or delays effective actions to address harms. Decision-makers should turn to community leaders for input, and trust what they tell them as truthful and valid data to be used to help inform more equitable policy.

About the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA) and CEJA Action

CEJA is a statewide, community-led alliance that works to achieve environmental justice by advancing policy solutions. 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. Together, we are growing the statewide movement for environmental health and social justice.

CEJA Action builds the political power of communities of color to advance environmentally and socially just policies in California. We accomplish this by engaging voters in communities of color; organizing and training grassroots leaders to engage in civil and electoral politics; and advocating for policies critical to improving the health and quality of life of communities of color. We believe California's communities of color are a powerful force for equitable environmental policies and a more participatory, inclusive democracy.



Contact Us

California Environmental Justice Alliance

1107 9th Street, Suite 901
Sacramento, CA 95814
ceja@caleja.org

www.caleja.org