

April 13, 2021

The Honorable Luz M. Rivas
Chair, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources
California State Assembly
Legislative Office Building Room 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1296 (Kamlager) - OPPOSE

Dear Chair Rivas,

On behalf of the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA), I write to inform your committee of SBCTA's opposition to Assembly Bill 1296 (Kamlager). This bill seeks to increase the number of board members on the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD).

SCAQMD is responsible for adopting policies and regulations that promote clean air within one of the smoggiest air basins in the nation. Federal and state law require that SCAQMD achieve clean air standards to protect public health.

The SCAQMD Board is governed by 13 members; 10 members representing cities and counties within the district's four-county boundaries, as well as three members appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate Rules Committee.

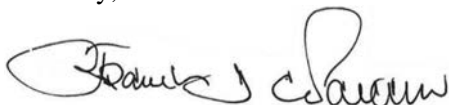
Decisions made by SCAQMD's Board have great impact on local business and residents of the South Coast Basin. The local elected officials serving on the SCAQMD Board are accountable to the region's constituents and voters.

Adding two more members to SCAQMD's Board, appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and Senate Rules Committee, would constitute one-third of the SCAQMD Board being appointed by state authorities. Unlike the local elected officials who serve on the Board, these political appointees will be unaccountable to the local businesses and residents who are impacted by Board decisions.

Additionally, the bill requires these new members be drawn from the environmental justice community. This is troubling for the fact that Board members should not represent a single constituency, but rather be guided by what is in the best interest of residents and businesses within SCAQMD's boundaries.

For the reasons stated above, SBCTA opposes AB 1296 (Kamlager). If you have any questions regarding SBCTA's position on this issue, please contact Otis Greer, Director of Legislative and Public Affairs, at (909) 884-8276.

Sincerely,



Frank J. Navarro
President, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority