



March 22, 2019

Senator Ben Allen  
 State Capitol, Room 4076  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 526 (Allen) Healthy Communities - SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Allen:

On behalf of our organizations, we are writing to express our support for your bill, SB 526, which takes critical steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation and land use. Pursuant to your 2017 legislation, SB 150, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) reviewed how regions were doing in meeting their regional emissions reduction targets. CARB’s Progress Report was released in November 2018 and found that regions are not on track to meet emissions reduction targets. The Progress Report was a wake-up call that, despite strong progress in reducing emissions from the electric sector, emissions from the transportation sector continue to increase. In order to meet the state’s climate goals, we have much more to do to reduce emissions from driving, also known as “vehicle miles traveled” or “VMT.”

In 2008, the Legislature passed, and Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB 375 by Senator Steinberg. This landmark law was the first of its kind to address climate change through land use and transportation. SB 375 required regions to adopt “Sustainable Communities Strategies” that take climate and VMT into account, and to better plan for population growth. SB 526 takes the common-sense next steps we need to improve upon the strong foundation laid in 2008.

SB 526 addresses the key conclusions of the Progress Report and requires the creation of an interagency working group to develop and implement a state Mobility Action Plan (MAP) for Healthy Communities to ensure the state’s environmental, equity, climate, health and housing goals are being met. This MAP for Healthy Communities will include stakeholder involvement through at least

four public meetings throughout the state, and broad representation among relevant state agencies, including the State Department of Public Health. The work of this panel would be communicated to the Legislature by December 31, 2020 and updated every four years.

The bill would also create a review and data collection process to ensure that CARB has adequate information to evaluate regional plans and whether transportation investments made within those plans result in increased or decreased VMT. If the plans continue to show that progress toward achieving regional targets is not being made, the bill would also update the guidelines for the State Transportation Improvement Program to ensure that higher priority would be given to projects that reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions.

In order to secure the public health, equity, affordable housing and transportation and mobility choices envisioned by SB 375, and to ensure California remains on track to reducing harmful pollution and attaining health-protective climate standards, real changes must be made to our transportation system and investments. SB 526 helps California reduce climate pollution from the transportation and land use sector, a key component to meeting our statewide greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Victoria Rome  
Director of CA Government Affairs  
Natural Resources Defense Council

Jonathan Pruitt  
Environmental Justice Program Coordinator  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton

Kathy Dervin  
Author  
350 Bay Area Action

Linda Rudolph  
Director  
Center for Climate Change and Public Health  
Institute

David Diaz  
Executive Director  
ActiveSGV

Kevin Hamilton  
Central California Asthma Collaborative

Jared Sanchez  
Senior Policy Advocate  
California Bicycle Coalition

Rocky Rushing  
Senior Policy Advocate  
Coalition for Clean Air

Liore Milgrom-Gartner  
Northern California Director  
California Interfaith Power & Light

Matthew Baker  
Policy Director  
Planning & Conservation League

Tony Dang  
Executive Director  
California Walks

Jonathan Matz  
California Senior Policy Manager  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership,  
California

Adina Levin  
Seamless Bay Area

Joshua Stark  
State Policy Director  
TransForm