

September 30, 2026

Dear Mr. Becerra:

Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) and the undersigned environmental justice, equity, public health, and environmental organizations, representing tens of thousands of Californians in vulnerable, pollution-overburdened communities, urge you to commit to making transportation justice and a zero-emission transportation future central to your governing priorities. We need our next Governor to take concrete action in the first 100 days and in the first budget to support affordable, accessible trains, trucks, cars, and buses that don't pollute our air or harm our health while supporting California workers.

The investments and policies we are recommending are part of California's affordability agenda. Working-class communities and communities of color in California are most vulnerable to gasoline price spikes, while fossil fuel companies profit from our sacrifice. Moving away from gasoline and diesel can reduce exposure to volatile fuel prices, lower transportation costs, create good jobs, improve public health, and keep more energy dollars in California. The benefits are significant: analysis cited by CBE estimates that transportation electrification could prevent approximately 2,265 premature deaths each year, as well as hospitalizations, asthma-related impacts, and lost school days, while generating roughly \$20 billion annually in health and economic benefits.

For decades, California's environmental justice communities have borne the greatest costs of a fossil-fuel transportation system. As you know, families near ports, freeways, warehouses, rail yards, refineries, and freight corridors breathe some of the nation's most polluted air. Children in our communities face higher risks of asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Working-class communities of color carry these health burdens while their neighborhoods generate major economic benefits for California and the country.

You know this history and have demonstrated leadership before. As California Attorney General, you created the Department of Justice's Bureau of Environmental Justice because low-income communities and communities of color disproportionately bear pollution from industrial development, transportation, and goods movement. Your office fought to protect communities near the Port of Los Angeles and insisted that environmental protections be enforceable—that California needs accountability, not just words. You also defended California's vehicle-emissions standards and Clean Air Act authority against federal efforts to strip the state of its ability to protect public health and

require cleaner vehicles. As Secretary of Health and Human Services, you led an agency that recognized that climate change worsens health disparities and that environmental justice and health equity must be integrated into government decision-making.

Now we need you to take action. California has made significant progress toward zero-emission transportation, but that progress has been reversed by the federal government. The transition must move quickly enough to protect public health and ensure that communities facing the greatest pollution burdens receive the earliest and greatest benefits. We urge you to commit through your first budget and administration policies—to the following clean, equitable transportation priorities:

- **Make eliminating diesel pollution from medium- and heavy-duty transportation a public-health priority.** California should accelerate the transition of trucks, locomotives, and freight equipment serving ports, warehouses, rail yards, and freight corridors to truly zero-emission technologies—not substitute diesel with natural gas, biofuels, hydrogen or other combustion technologies that continue to burden communities with harmful air pollution, while strengthening the state’s authority to set ambitious requirements. Investments should prioritize communities with the greatest pollution burdens and support small fleets, independent operators, workers, and the infrastructure they need.
- **Put environmental justice communities first in transportation investments.** State transportation and climate dollars should focus on disadvantaged, pollution-burdened communities rather than assume market benefits will reach them. That means more support for low-income households to access zero-emission mobility options; charging infrastructure in communities, multifamily housing, workplaces, and public locations; expanded clean transit and shared mobility; and community-driven investments that reduce pollution and household transportation costs.
- **Establish durable, long-term funding for California’s zero-emission transportation transition.** California cannot build a clean transportation system through unstable annual appropriations and short-lived programs. The state needs dependable multiyear funding for zero-emission vehicles, trucks, buses, locomotives; charging infrastructure; community mobility; and programs that make these technologies affordable and accessible to low-income Californians.
- **Make Future Zero Emission Vehicle Sales More Abundant and Affordable** Direct CARB to adopt strong future requirements for clean-vehicle manufacturer sales of new trucks and cars to ensure California can benefit from the same cost-effective zero-emission trucks and cars being sold globally. New standards must be strong enough for California to meet legally required clean air and climate

targets. To complement strong standards, California must leverage public-sector investments to attract private-sector investment that increases the availability of vehicles and infrastructure in frontline communities.

- **Direct CARB to adopt an Indirect Source Rule (ISR).** Too many of California's underserved communities live and work in freight corridors and warehouses, becoming the 21st-century equivalent of 19th-century factory workers. By building on the successful regional ISR rules in California, we can ensure that leading shipping, rail, and warehouse companies invest in zero-emission solutions that can reduce pollution impacts in our communities.
- **Make equity measurable and enforceable.** Every major clean transportation program should show who benefits, where investments go, whether pollution is declining in overburdened communities, and whether programs reduce transportation costs for working families. Frontline communities must have a meaningful role in setting metrics, designing programs, and holding agencies accountable. Within the state government, Go-Biz' ZEV Equity Advocate should lead a whole-of-government approach to setting and enforcing these metrics.
- **Implementation of infrastructure policies with a focus on Equity.** Accelerate equitable zero-emission charging infrastructure. Direct California agencies to coordinate infrastructure investments, establish aggressive deployment targets, and measure whether charging infrastructure is reaching disadvantaged communities, multifamily housing, workplaces, and households that have historically been excluded from clean transportation investments.

You have argued that California's clean-energy transition must be affordable, reliable, and fair and that its benefits must reach everyone. We fully agree. Federal attacks on California's clean-air authority and climate policies make state leadership critical. California should not retreat from clean transportation or leave environmental justice communities to bear the costs of weakened federal protections. The state should use every regulatory, budgetary, legal, and administrative tool available to keep moving toward a zero-emission transportation system, while continuing to fight illegal attacks on California's Clean Air Act authority.

You have recognized that environmental justice communities are often hit first and worst by pollution and climate change. As Governor, you would have the opportunity to ensure those communities are first in line to benefit from California's clean transportation future.

We look forward to working with you to make California's zero-emission transportation transition a win-win model for enhancing public health, economic development, high-road job creation, climate leadership, and delivering on environmental justice.

Sincerely,

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