

## **AB 179 (Cervantes):**

### **Environmental Justice Representation on the CA Transportation Commission**

As Amended in Assembly: February 14, 2017

Last updated: April 18, 2017

#### **PURPOSE OF THE BILL**

Under existing law, the only requirements imposed on appointed commissioners of the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is that they not serve in another elected position, or as a member of another body that has business before the Commission.

AB 179 would require 1 appointed CTC commissioner to have direct experience working with communities burdened by high levels of pollution, including those with racially or ethnically diverse, or low-income, communities.

#### **PROBLEM & NEED FOR THE BILL**

The only qualification requirement currently imposed on the 10 appointed CTC commissioners is that they must not serve in elected office. They must also not serve on any local or regional board or commission that has business before the CTC. Commissioners are not required to have either technical backgrounds or expertise in matters related to transportation issues.

This is in stark contrast to many other state commissions and boards that have relevant expertise requirements that are enshrined in state law.

After the signing of AB 2616 (Burke, 2016), the California Coastal Commission is required to have at least one member that resides “in, and work directly with, communities in the state that are disproportionately burdened by, and vulnerable to, high levels of pollution and issues of environmental justice.”

For instance, three members of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) must have expertise requirements. One member must have an “expertise in science, agriculture or law.” Another must be a “physician and surgeon, or health

effects expert.” The final member must have an expertise in either air pollution control or the backgrounds required by the other two members.

In addition, the Strategic Growth Council has three public members who are required to have “a background in land use planning, local government, resource protection and management, or community development or revitalization.”

Without provisions like those affecting CARB, Strategic Growth Council, and the Coastal Commission, the CTC has no statutory guarantee of having commissioners who are experts on vitally important issues that share a strong intersection with the complexities of transportation policy in California.

#### **WHAT THIS BILL WOULD DO**

AB 179 would require 1 appointed CTC commissioner to have direct experience working with communities burdened by high levels of pollution, including those with racially or ethnically diverse, or low-income, communities.

The bill would also require that the CTC and the Air Resources board meet at least twice per year to collaborate on the implementation of transportation policy.

#### **BILL STATUS**

Referred to the Assembly Transportation Committee – January 19, 2017

#### **SUPPORTERS**

CA Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN)  
(sponsor)

Center for Community Action & Environmental Justice (sponsor)

Climate Plan (sponsor)