



September 7, 2012

Secretary Matthew Rodriguez
Secretary for Environmental Protection, Cal/EPA
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



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RE: Cal/EPA California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool

Dear Secretary Rodriguez,

Recently, the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) released a draft of their California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool. This tool will be used to score levels of "environmental vulnerability" throughout the state and threatens to redline communities that are seen as particularly "vulnerable." Local elected officials were not made aware of the development of this tool, or adequately consulted on its development.

As this tool appears to have the potential to adversely impact economic development in local communities, we respectfully request additional time to review and comment on this proposal.

Local mayors, council members, and county supervisors must be included on any state-level discussion of how our local land use authority and local business permitting process will be affected if subjected to a scoring or ranking system devised by your agency.

Any policy that may delay permitting, affect land use authority or otherwise impact the economic vitality of Los Angeles area cities must include the proactive involvement of local elected officials and municipal leaders. This proposed tool can be used to compare areas of the state against others, creating a relative ranking of the most environmentally depressed regions in the state, and thus driving business out of one region and into another. If vital community investors view some communities as "environmentally burdened," it could cause property values to drop and push businesses out of our region – and potentially the State – at a time when economic growth is an imperative.

We urge the Cal/EPA to:

- Grant additional time for comment on the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool until cities and local governments have the opportunity to participate and the full screening tool is made available for evaluation.

- Hold specific stakeholder meetings with local elected representatives in regions throughout the state where the Cal/EPA has identified that discussions should take place. Cal/EPA must bring local elected voices to this extremely important discussion.

I urge you to contact our Division Executive Director, Robb Korinke at 562.912.3483 or at robb@lacityes.org to initiate outreach to Los Angeles area cities.

Sincerely,



Steve Diels
President, Los Angeles Division, League of California Cities
Council Member, City of Redondo Beach

CC: Governor Edmund Brown, Jr.,
Arsenio Mataka, Assistant Secretary, Cal/EPA
George Alexeeff, director, OEHHA