

February 1, 2013

Mr. Matthew Rodriguez
Secretary
California Environmental Protection Agency
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Cal/EPA California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool
(CalEnviroScreen); January 2013 Draft

Dear Secretary Rodriguez:

Local government officials have expressed serious reservations regarding Cal/EPA and OEHHA's July 2012 draft California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen). The January 2013 draft of CalEnviroScreen has not mitigated those concerns as substantial technical and scientific deficiencies remain in both the data utilized and the design of the tool. However, most critical is the need for Cal/EPA and OEHHA to recognize and explain the deficiencies and ensure that the associated documents restrict the use of CalEnviroScreen to a very limited pool of non-regulatory uses to attempt to mitigate any harm from its misapplication. To that end, we recommend that language be included as follows:

It is important to note the limitations of CalEnviroScreen. The tool provides only a relative ranking of communities by consolidating a selected group of available datasets into a simplified summary score, and as such is neither a science-based risk assessment, nor a site-specific cumulative impacts assessment. Further, this tool does not provide any basis for determining when differences between scores are significant in relation to public health or the environment, or whether any score accurately describes public health and environmental conditions. Accordingly, the tool is not intended to be and may not be used as a risk assessment for a specific area or site, or as the basis for any regulatory, permitting or land use decisions or studies (including but not limited to the cumulative impacts analysis required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)). The publication of this tool does not create any legal obligation or recommended approach by any agency or party to conduct additional detailed cumulative or other analysis for the staff reports written for individual rulemaking or any recommended approach for any government entity to use or apply this tool in any funding, regulatory, or planning context.

Further, the remainder of the document should be edited to be consistent with the above paragraph to ensure that there is no confusion on the limitations of CalEnviroScreen and to guarantee any attempt at misuse can be corrected with a simple reading of the included guidance from your agency.

We thank you for your favorable consideration of our comments and look forward to continuing to work with you and Cal/EPA and OEHHA staff as future versions of CalEnviroScreen are considered.

Sincerely,

Council Member Arne Simonsen

City of Antioch

Council Member Gary Agopian

City of Antioch

Mayor Pro Tem Angel Carrillo

City of Azusa

Mayor Pro Tem Bruce Barrows

City of Cerritos

Council Member Sam Pedroza

City of Claremont

Council Member Rosa Perez

City of Huntington Park

Mayor Mary Ann Lutz

City of Monrovia

Council Member Charlie Klinakis

City of La Puente

Mayor Sandra Armenta

City of Rosemead

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander Ethans

City of Stanton