

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2022

Contact: Roxanna Smith, 510.326.0390
roxanna@storyandreach.com

San Joaquin Valley environmental justice, air quality experts slam Newsom's rejection of law to clean up nation's dirtiest air

Approved by lawmakers and backed by San Joaquin Valley community organizations, AB2550 aimed to correct decades of environmental racism, injustice

FRESNO, Calif. - [Governor Gavin Newsom has rejected AB2550](#), a bill aimed at addressing decades of environmental racism in the San Joaquin Valley. Authored by Assemblyman and emergency room physician Dr. Joaquin Arambula (D-Fresno), the bill would have empowered the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to work collaboratively with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the general public, as well as marginalized community-based organizations and disadvantaged communities to review past failures and create and implement additional programs and strategies to meet healthy-air standards for ozone and fine particle pollution. For decades [San Joaquin Valley residents have breathed some of the dirtiest, most dangerous, deadliest air in the country](#).

AB2550 was [approved by the California State Assembly by a wide margin](#).

“Governor Newsom failed the breathers of the San Joaquin Valley, especially low income communities and communities of color who breathe some of the dirtiest air in the nation. After decades of failing to meet federal standards for fine particles and ozone pollution, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is empowered to continue its legacy of environmental racism, injustice and delinquency.

Governor Newsom's choice to ignore our pleas for the most basic of human rights — to breathe clean air — will cause continued injustices, additional lives lost, a growing population of asthmatic children and parents, as well as worsening unhealthy air for the San Joaquin Valley.”

—Dr. Catherine Garoupa White is executive director of the [Central Valley Air Quality Coalition](#). CVAQ spearheads policy advocacy for clean air in the San Joaquin Valley.

“Governor Newsom’s decision means we will continue to get sick, and we will continue to lose too many of our people far before their time.

We are asking for the chance to clean up the toxic air we are forced to breathe everyday. We stand ready to support the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in an ambitious, transparent and collaborative process to correct decades of delinquency by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

When will you finally hear our pleas for help, Governor?”

—Matt Holmes is environmental justice outreach coordinator for South Stockton’s [Little Manila Rising](#), which seeks equitable solutions from the effects of historical marginalization on issues such as education, the environment, redevelopment, and public health.

Dr. Garoupa White and Mr. Holmes are available to be interviewed. Please schedule a meeting by reaching out to Roxanna Smith (510.326.0390, roxanna@storyandreach.com). The two jointly authored a Fresno Bee opinion article calling for the passage of AB2550 in May of 2022. Read that article [here](#).