

SB 999 (Machado)

Fact Sheet

THE PROBLEM

The San Joaquin Valley is one of the most polluted regions in America, often beating out Los Angeles as the air basin with the worst air quality. The San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board ["(Valley Air) Board"] is in a prime position to clean the Valley's air, thereby improving the health of the Valley's children, communities and economy.

- 1 in 3 families in the San Joaquin Valley has a member with a respiratory ailment.
- 1 out of 6 of the region's children and 1 in 8 adults suffers from asthma.
- At least 808,000 school absences occur each year in the San Joaquin Valley due to asthma, which accounts for lost revenue to regional school districts of \$26 million annually.
- There are more than 1,200 premature deaths each year in the Valley due to particulate matter pollution.

The Valley Air Board needs broader representation and more expertise to develop and implement clean air plans. In addition, the Board lacks continual representation from its three largest metropolitan areas: Fresno, Bakersfield and Stockton. These cities are currently entitled to representation on the Valley Air Board only 5 out of every 15 years. In fact, the City of Fresno has not had a representative on the Board since 1993.

The Board lacks expertise in public health and air pollution science – two critical components to understanding the Valley's air quality issues. Unlike its more effective counterpart, Los Angeles's South Coast Air Quality Management District, the Valley Air Board has no publicly appointed members with any type of expertise.

Due to the Board's unsuccessful clean-up plans, hundreds of small businesses will soon be subjected to costly regulation not required in most areas of the state. This places the already economically distressed region at a disadvantage. Additionally, billions of dollars in federal transportation funds are at risk of being frozen or lost.

THE SOLUTION

Specifically, SB 999 (Machado) expands the Valley Air Board membership from 11 to 15 members, to include additional representation from urban areas and members of the public. Key features of the legislation:

- The cities of Fresno, Bakersfield, and Stockton will each gain a permanent seat on the Valley Air Board. Membership will be more proportional to the population of each jurisdiction. Board members are important purveyors of information, and the three city councils will benefit from ongoing direct representation and communication with the Valley Air Board.
- The bill adds two non-elected (public) members to the Board with expertise in medical health and air quality science. The Governor would appoint the two public members, with Senate confirmation. Residency in the district is required.
- Allows the eight local county public health officers to review and recommend potential appointee candidates to the Governor.

WHY THIS BILL?

A larger Valley Air Board, with broader experience and geographic reach, will allow the Valley to reach clean air goals. This bill would provide more fair and consistent representation to the San Joaquin Valley's largest cities. Adding positions for public members with specific health/medical, and scientific experience will bring new perspectives to the Valley Air Board. This approach has been very successful with both the California Air Resources Board and LA's South Coast Air Quality Management District.

- In California, regional air districts are responsible for developing and implementing plans to attain the federal smog and particulate matter (PM) air quality standards. Recent cleanup plans for smog and PM have been inadequate or delayed. A bigger Valley Air Board may be more successful in establishing meaningful plans, meeting deadlines, and help the Valley attain clean air goals.

- The Valley Air Board will remain “local” under this legislation. Valley residency is required in order to be appointed to the Board, which will overwhelmingly remain composed of local elected officials.
- This bill would infuse the Valley Air Board with two public health experts: a physician and an air quality science professional. To protect children’s and the community’s welfare, the Board needs members with public health expertise.
- SB 999 would make the SJV Air District more representative of the Valley’s population and ensure that the voices of affected communities are heard through representation from small- and medium-sized cities. It also guarantees a consistent voice for the Valley’s largest cities (Stockton, Fresno and Bakersfield).

WHY NOW?

The San Joaquin Valley’s Air District covers a bigger geographic area of any other air district in the country and, therefore, contains a complex set of air pollution problems. It makes sense to have a larger, geographically broader board, with public health experience.

Poor air quality affects the Valley’s workforce through skyrocketing health costs, which has an impact on the economy.

An expanded Valley Air Board will more effectively meet deadlines, approve strong air pollution cleanup plans, and ultimately, resolve the air quality crisis plaguing the San Joaquin Valley.

This legislation is about responsiveness, community representation, and, ultimately, improved health for all of the Valley’s citizens.

TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW

With people dying and children suffering due to the devastating effects of air pollution, the 3.2 million Valley residents deserve to have a Valley Air Board that represents their interests and their communities. SB 999 would broaden the voice setting regional air quality policy and put the region on a path to solving its air quality emergency.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

The Central Valley Air Quality (CVAQ) Coalition asks you to write, fax, or visit your local California Assembly Member (the bill passed the full Senate in May 2005 and awaits a vote on the Assembly floor) and tell him/her that you support SB 999. You can find your Assembly Member online at <http://leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html> and go to the CVAQ Coalition web site <http://www.calcleanair.org/node/57> for a sample letter of support.

SUPPORTERS

Community, Medical, Public Health, Environmental, and Labor Organizations:

- American Lung Association of California
- California League of Conservation Voters
- California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
- Californians for Pesticide Reform
- Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment
- Central Valley Air Quality (CVAQ) Coalition
- Coalition for Clean Air
- Community Action to Fight Asthma
- Community Asthma Education and Management
- Diocese of Stockton
- Dolores Huerta Foundation
- El Comité Para El Bienestar de Earlimart (Committee for the Well Being of Earlimart)
- Environment California
- Fresno Metro Ministry
- Grayson Neighborhood Council

Community, Medical, Public Health, Environmental, and Labor Organizations (continued)

Latino Issues Forum
League of Women Voters/California
League of Women Voters/Fresno
Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma
Medical Advocates for Healthy Air
Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition
Natural Resources Defense Council
Planning and Conservation League
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (RAMP) Initiative
Relational Culture Institute
San Diego Regional Asthma Coalition
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sierra Club California
Steven and Michele Kirsch Foundation
Union of Concerned Scientists

Elected Officials, Local/County Governments, and Political Organizations:

Fresno City Council
The Honorable Edward J. Chavez (Mayor) and Stockton City Council
The Honorable Susan B. Anderson, Supervisor, District Two, County of Fresno
The Honorable Henry Perea, Supervisor, District Three, Fresno County
City of Kingsburg
Fresno County Office of Education
Merced County Office of Education
Fresno County Democratic Central Committee
Madera County Democratic Central Committee

Newspapers:

The Bakersfield Californian
The Fresno Bee
The Modesto Bee
The San Francisco Chronicle

Individuals/San Joaquin Valley Residents: **

Bea Acosta (Modesto)
Emeterio Aguilar (Fresno)
Lupe Alavarez (Turlock)
Jennifer Alcantaro
Maria Alejandre (Fresno)
Joe and Carmen Ard (Patterson)
Concepcion Badillo (Fresno)
Martha Barajas (Fresno)
Alicia Bohlke, Director of Clinics, Mercy Medical
Center Merced
Laura Carranza (Fresno)
Adriana Castañeda (Fresno)
Nouthanh Chantharisonn (Fresno)
Enedina Chavez
Primavera Chavez (Patterson)
Vianney Cisneros (Fresno)
Avery Ray Colter (Bay Point)
Estela Corona (Westley)
Reynaldo Cruz (Fresno)
Carmen Cuevas (Kerman)
Maria De Leon (Fresno)
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Individuals/SJV Residents: ** (continued)

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Bertha Diaz (Fresno)
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Patricia Esparza (Fresno)
Fatima Fabian (Fresno)
Lori Ferriera, RCP, CRT
Adriana Figueroa (Fresno)
Lydia Flores (Fresno)
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Medical Group
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Chrissy Garcia (Crows Landing)
Mrs. Santos Cantu Garcia (Newman)
Rosa German (Fresno)
Lidia Gil (Grayson)
Vianca Gili (Westley)
Bea Giotto (Modesto)
Hector Gonzalez (Fresno)
Maria Isabel Guevera (Grayson)
Barbara Harmon, RN, PHN
Juanita Hinigosa (Westley)
Jeremy Hofer (Fresno)
Derrol Keith (Fresno)
Bernardino Juarez (Fresno)
Elena Kissell (Winton)
Estela La Corona (Westley)
Cathy Lindeboom (Fresno)
Magdalena Llamas (Fresno)
Kelly Llonow (Fresno)
Hilda Lopez (Fresno)
Socorro Luna (Fresno)
Reyna I. Martinez (Merced)
Cassandra Matson (Crows Landing)
Carlota Mauzo (Fresno)
Elizabeth Mejia (Fresno)
Valeria Mendoza Valdenegro (Fresno)
Michele Meneses (Merced)
Maria Rosario Mercedes (Fresno)
Anne Merrill, RN (Sanger)
Marilyn Mochel, RN
Hortencia Morales (Patterson)
Patricia Morales (Fresno)
Youa Moua (Fresno)
Jack Nelson (Fresno)
Hidalgo Oksano (Fresno)
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Shawn N. Putnam (Fresno)
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County Bicycle Coalition
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Francis Sanchez
Joan K. Sharma (Fresno)
Daniela Simunovic (Fresno)
Judy Stege (Fresno)
Susan Sutton-Mazocco (Auberry)
Pao Thao (Fresno)
Jesse Torres (Fresno)
Marciela Torres (Patterson)
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Maixiong Vang (Fresno)
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**Titles used for identification purposes only.

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