

Although this resolution mentions rural in a couple of places, it does not acknowledge how rural communities are historically disadvantaged and front-line communities in the face of climate change. During the Feb. 2021 ice storms, power outages, water outages, lack of sanitation and other serious consequences persisted much longer in rural communities than urban. During the Sept 2020 wildfires, evacuation zones, destruction and loss were predominantly in rural communities. By-and-large rural roads are not up to normal roadway standards (e.g. they typically lack shoulders even near ditches and ravines and force pedestrians and bicyclists into the lane of vehicular travel) even though urban roads typically are up to roadway standards. Some of these very roads bogged down for hours when residents were evacuating wildfires and they could have become death traps. Rural areas typically have poor jobs available and in many areas incomes are low. Environmental justice would be better served and more fairly bestowed if equity was measured, defined and implemented based on data rather than assumptions and hunches about injustice.