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On Behalf Of: myself

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: HB4077

We need the Environmental Justice Task Force to be elevated to a Council and funded to enable full participation by our citizens who have too often been left out of the discussion on energy use, environmental conservation, and social justice. Why do we need their voices? Very often these are the people first impacted by bad practices and first to have meaningful ideas for solutions. I could say it's the right thing to do but the real reason is we, as citizens trying to make tough decisions, need their perspective.

Who knows better the toxic effect of oil storage and distribution facilities than those who live next door. Who know better the adverse effects of climate change than those working as laborers in agriculture. Who better knows how to honor the earth and wildlife than indigenous peoples who have embraced nature as part of their culture for seven generations plus in history and going forward.

On the strictly practical side, Governor Brown's EO 20-04 instructs agencies to include members of the Environmental Justice Task Force in their Rule Advisory Committees and solicit input from the larger community. These agencies cannot adequately do their work without a strong Environmental Justice Council. I am astonished by the number of people who tell me they have never heard of the EJTF. Now is the time to elevate this group to give voice to their concerns and bring their knowledge and insight to the table for all of our environmental planning and rule making.