



ROB BONTA

Attorney General

Attorney General Bonta Announces \$10 Million in Grants to Research Vehicle-Related Air Pollution and Mitigate Impacts to Environmental Justice Communities Across California

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OAKLAND – California Attorney General Rob Bonta today announced the recipients of a \$10 million program to study the effects of vehicle emissions in California on public health and the environment. The grants, which stem from a 2016 settlement with Volkswagen over its emission cheating scandal, will fund research, development, and the acquisition of technology that enhances understanding of vehicle-related air pollution and its impacts, particularly in communities who are under-resourced and overburdened.

“As the People’s Attorney, I’m committed to using every tool in our toolbox to provide assistance to – and elevate the voices of – those communities hit first and worst by environmental pollution,” **said Attorney General Bonta.** “In selecting the recipients of the Automobile Emissions Research and Technology Fund grants, we focused on proposals that included partnerships with local organizations and environmental justice communities. Today, I’m pleased to announce the seven recipients, who will engage in a diverse array of projects to study and mitigate the environmental and health impacts of vehicle emissions in communities across the state.”

The Automobile Emissions Research and Technology Fund grant program will fund the following projects:

Addressing Emissions and Air Quality Impacts of Goods Movement in Inland Empire Communities: University of California Riverside, College of Engineering - Center for Environmental Research and Technology, in partnership with the Coalition for Clean Air, will receive \$2,000,000 to address the emissions and air quality impacts of goods movement in environmental justice communities within Southern California's Inland Empire. The project

will focus on those communities most disproportionately burdened by heavy-duty diesel truck emissions from freight corridors and freight-related sources.

“This research initiative is critical to our local community, as goods movement in our region continues to grow. These funds will allow us to apply our latest research and technology to help mitigate air pollution impacts on our residents, and improve the environment we live in,” **said Matthew Barth, CE-CERT Director.**

San Joaquin Valley Center for Community Air Assessment and Injustice

Reduction: University of California Merced, Health Sciences Research Institute, in partnership with Little Manila Rising, will receive \$1,222,460.19 to address traffic-related air pollution and its health impacts in the San Joaquin Valley. The funds will be used to launch a mobile air quality laboratory and health assessment clinic; to deploy community air quality monitoring networks in Stockton and Fresno through the installation of 125 new PurpleAir monitors; and to establish a permanent community-university air quality research and clinical center at UC Merced.

"I am thrilled to be working closely with community leaders in Stockton and other San Joaquin Valley communities who are leading the way to cleaner air and a healthier environment for our children," **said Dr. Asa Bradman, who will be leading the new San Joaquin Valley Center for Community Air Assessment and Injustice Reduction (SJV CC-AIR) at the University of California, Merced.** "Establishing a Center for air pollution research and prevention directly aligns with UC Merced's goal to conduct state-of-the-art science that serves community needs, informs good decision-making and provides educational opportunities for our students, the future public health leaders of our state."

Beyond the Tailpipe: Air Quality and Health Impacts of Non-Tailpipe Vehicle

Pollutants: AirUCI Institute, University of California Irvine, in partnership with the Madison Park Neighborhood Association, will receive \$1,932,479 to study the composition, toxicity, incidence, and potential health effects of non-tailpipe vehicle pollutants such as particulate emissions from tires and breaks. As electric cars replace traditional combustion vehicles, it remains important to study emissions sources that will continue to persist. The Santa Ana-based project will research tire and brake emissions and their effects on cardiovascular and reproductive health; conduct real-time air-sampling studies; map ambient particulate matter emissions for Santa Ana residents; conduct ethnographic interviews and focus groups to gather perspectives on air pollution in environmental justice communities; and host data workshops and community meetings to communicate project findings.

"We are excited to have the opportunity to integrate chemistry and engineering approaches with health effects and anthropological studies of non-tailpipe emissions associated with brakes and tires and their impacts on a local underserved community," **said Barbara Finlayson-Pitts, Co-Director of AirUCI.** "This unique collaboration across disciplines and communities including an active environmental justice group in Santa Ana, CA will provide a broad assessment of the current impact of brake and tire wear as well as future likely scenarios as fossil fuels are phased out in the transportation sector."

Sacramento Environmental Justice Community Air Monitoring Project: Sacramento County Department of Health Services will receive \$1,985,639 to establish an air-monitoring network in Sacramento to assess the impacts of vehicle emissions on economically disadvantaged, pollution-burdened communities. The project will use emissions data to model relationships between air quality and respiratory health, educate and engage residents and community organizers on environmental justice issues, and inform and support subsequent mitigation efforts. More than half of the funding will be regranting to community-based organizations, who will participate directly in the project. These include: Breathe California, United Latinos, Red, Black, and Green Environmental Justice Coalition, Sacramento Native American Health Center, Climate Plan, Latino Leadership Council, 350 Sacramento, and Teatro Nagual, as well as Sacramento State University.

“We are thrilled to utilize this grant funding to further our mission of a healthy, thriving Sacramento,” **said Chevon Kothari, Director of Sacramento County Department of Health Services.** “To complement the great work our Division of Public Health and Public Health Officer are already doing, we’ll award these critical funds to our community based organizations that are doing important work educating and providing resources to our underserved communities – and will improve the lives and health of everyone in Sacramento County.”

Bay Area Healthy Homes Initiative: Bay Area Air Quality Management District, in partnership with the Bay Area Regional Energy Network, Contra Costa Health Services, Alameda County’s StopWaste program, and the Association for Energy Affordability, will receive \$1,999,279 to conduct in-home asthma assessments and case management services and perform indoor air quality remediation and home retrofitting in communities disproportionately impacted and chronically burdened by air pollution.

"This grant will deliver clean indoor air for Bay Area residents who live in communities heavily impacted by air pollution through our Healthy Homes Initiative," **said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.** "This funding will be instrumental to improve public health in vulnerable populations and ensure clean air is accessible for the residents who need it most."

Biomonitoring Environmental Impacts of Air Pollution and Climate Change in Southern California: California State University, Dominguez Hills will receive \$140,575 to study the environmental and ecological impacts of automobile emissions and other anthropogenic pollution on southern California ecosystems. This project will use dendrochronology – the study of tree rings – to look at the relationships between climate variables, tree growth, and pollution at high and low pollution sites in the Santa Monica Mountains. In addition to supporting this novel research approach, the program will also directly engage and train students in inquiry-based environmental research.

"This award will provide a really exciting opportunity for understanding the environmental impacts of air pollution and climate change on Southern California's ecosystems, and it will also be a wonderful experience for the graduate and undergraduate students engaged in the research project," **said Dr. Justin Valliere, assistant professor of biology and the CSUDH project’s principal investigator.**

Los Angeles Community College Public Education Campaign on Electric Vehicle Use: The Los Angeles Community College District will receive \$719,567.81 to support a public education campaign encouraging the LACCD community to transition to electric vehicle use. The electric vehicle adoption efforts envisioned by this project would target underserved communities with practical outreach designed to complement existing infrastructure investments.

“The Los Angeles Community College District is committed to long-term environmental sustainability and carbon neutral initiatives and we are proud to be part of the grant program from California Attorney General Rob Bonta and the Department of Justice to provide education and resources to our surrounding communities about electric vehicles. LACCD will use this grant to work directly with many of our under-served and disadvantaged communities in alignment with our focus on equity and social justice for the communities served by our nine colleges,” **said Rueben C. Smith, D.C.Sc., Vice Chancellor and Chief Facilities Executive for LACCD.**

Recipients for the Automobile Emissions Research and Technology Fund grant were selected from a large pool of competitive applications. We thank all those who applied for their commitment to studying and reducing air pollution in vulnerable communities across the state.

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