



June 4, 2024

The Honorable David Cortese  
Chair, Senate Committee on Transportation  
State Capitol, Room 405  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Support for Assembly Bill 6 (Friedman) in re: Transportation Planning**

The American Lung Association writes in support of Assembly Bill 6 (AB 6, Friedman) to ensure meaningful implementation of Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) under California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (Senate Bill 375, Steinberg). Despite more than a decade of implementation of the law, the intended outcomes remain – and continue to move further – out of reach.

California is home to the most difficult air pollution challenges in the United States, and climate change is making the job of cleaning the air more difficult. More than nine in ten people in California live in a community impacted by unhealthy air pollution in the form of ozone “smog” and/or particle pollution “soot”. These pollutants impact health in many ways, including worsening lung and heart conditions, asthma exacerbation, heart attack, stroke, and premature death. Breathing particle pollution can cause lung cancer. Children, seniors, and those with pre-existing health conditions are at greater risk – and people of color, people with lower incomes often face more direct, local pollution burdens.

The transportation sector is a leading source of these harmful pollutants, and the leading source of climate pollution in California. AB 6 recognizes that SB 375, California's landmark policy for better aligning transportation and land use planning with climate pollution reductions is failing to meet the mark and this failure is pushing the state further off course, worsening inequities and threatening attainment of clean air and climate goals. Under existing state law, regional greenhouse gas reduction targets are established by the California Air Resource Board (CARB) and SCS plans are prepared by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Those plans or alternative plans are submitted to CARB for review, but CARB is limited to acceptance or rejection based on a determination that the strategy would, if implemented, achieve the region's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. Among other provisions, AB 6 would eliminate the limitation that CARB simply accept or reject plans and would authorize the state board to reject the plan if it determines that the strategy is unlikely to be implemented.

Regional plans that align with our clean air and climate standards must be implemented and executed as intended to reduce pollution, improve public health, and create more livable and active communities. For these reasons, we urge committee members to vote “aye.” Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, contact me at [William.Barrett@lung.org](mailto:William.Barrett@lung.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William Barrett".

Will Barrett  
Senior Director, Nationwide Clean Air Advocacy