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April 4, 2016

Assembly Natural Resources Committee Passes Bill to Expand Benefits of Clean Energy Economy

*AB 1550 Would Send More Dollars Paid by Polluters to
Disadvantaged Neighborhoods and Low-Income Households*

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SACRAMENTO – The Assembly Natural Resources Committee today passed AB 1550 (Gomez), designed to ensure that the benefits of California’s climate change policies reach the communities and households that need them most. The bipartisan vote was 6-0 with three members not voting. The measure would require a minimum of 25 percent of proceeds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to be invested in projects located directly within disadvantaged communities and would require that an additional percentage go to fund projects that benefit low income households, regardless of where they are located within California.

Advocates for disadvantaged communities and climate protection hailed the vote:

“Assembly Member Gomez’s bill would assure that the Californians most at risk from catastrophic climate change receive real help from programs that fight pollution and deliver needed services,” said Bill Magavern, Policy Director for the Coalition for Clean Air, who spoke on behalf of the legislation at today’s hearing.

“Millions of Californians have benefitted from climate investments bringing clean energy and consumer savings to low-income and highly polluted neighborhoods,” said Greenlining Institute Environmental Equity Director Alvaro Sanchez, who also testified

in favor of the bill. "AB 1550 takes the next step and makes sure a fair share of those benefits go to low-income California families wherever they live."

Chelsea Tu, Staff Attorney with Public Advocates, said, "By directing investments to lower-income families, whether or not they live in disadvantaged communities, this important bill goes a long way toward ensuring that the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund brings economic and health benefits to communities throughout California. We applaud its advance through the legislature."

"We have an opportunity here to improve the quality of life of all Californians by investing in the neighborhoods who are enduring the most severe poverty, in addition to the most polluted neighborhoods in the state," said Parin Shah, Senior Strategist at Asian Pacific Environmental Network. "These are the communities, such as the families that we organize near the Richmond Chevron Refinery, that will most benefit from improvements in renewable energy, affordable housing and public transit,"
