



June 21, 2022

The Honorable Cristina Garcia
Assemblymember, District 58
California State Assembly
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, California 94249-0058

RE: Opposition to AB 1778

Dear Assemblymember Garcia:

On behalf of the City of Beaumont, I write in opposition to AB 1778. As written, AB 1778 would prohibit state funds or personnel time from being used for the funding or permitting of specified freeway projects in areas that fall within the zero to 50th percentile on the housing and environmental variables analyzed through the California Healthy Places Index.

If implemented, this bill would impact projects slated for or currently in construction, many of which were developed for the safety and operational improvement of the state highway system. Completely eliminating highway widenings and interchange expansions as an option in disadvantaged communities would negatively impact their ability to utilize the state highway system to make ends meet, or access employment and education opportunities.

Transportation projects already undergo extensive and interactive environmental review and permitting processes to meet state and federal requirements. This process includes community engagement, public comment, and mitigation of any adverse impacts from a project. The City of Beaumont strongly believes in collaboration, consensus, and local control in making regional transportation decisions.

The City of Beaumont supports actions that reduce air pollution and provide mobility options for all communities across Riverside County and recognize efforts to address past transportation decisions that have instituted and perpetuated inequities, particularly to disadvantaged and low-income individuals and communities.

However, the City believes this bill may result in unintended consequences, harming the very individuals and communities it seeks to uplift. Divesting from the state highway system in suburban and rural areas where housing is more available and affordable, will adversely impact disadvantaged and low-income communities that rely on the highway system to get to jobs and education centers. This bill similarly fails to recognize the billions



of dollars in state investments that would be needed to develop robust and reliable multimodal transit alternatives in these regions to place all communities on an equitable footing.

For these reasons, the City of Beaumont opposes AB 1778.

Sincerely,

Lloyd White
Mayor

cc: Assembly Member Mayes
Senator Ochoa-Bogh