

## **Communities demand equity in renewable energy**

Thursday, May 31 - Sacramento, CA – Efforts to help communities of color access renewable energy and jobs made a significant step forward on Wednesday. AB 1990, “Solar for All,” authored by Assemblymember Paul Fong (D-Cupertino), passed out of the Assembly with a vote of 49 – 27. The bill would create a pilot project throughout California to build small-scale renewable projects in low-income communities and communities of color. AB 1990 is sponsored by the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA), a statewide alliance of grassroots groups working on environmental issues that impact low-income communities and communities of color.

“AB 1990 is an important first step to ensure that all communities benefit from renewable energy in California. Currently, communities of color have potential to benefit from renewable energy, but unfortunately lack access. AB 1990 would start changing the status quo,” said Assemblymember Fong. “This bill addresses financing barriers to starting clean and green technology projects by directing the Public Utilities Commission to create a uniform contract and pricing structure for these projects and targets communities impacted by environmental pollution.”

“I live in Huntington Park, and we are surrounded by industry. My friends and many of the youth at the high school suffer – we have asthma and problems breathing from all the air pollution,” says Fernando Cuevas, a resident who traveled to Sacramento on Wednesday to support AB 1990. “This bill would help us get clean energy and hopefully start reducing that pollution.”

AB 1990 also encourages hiring from the same low-income communities where projects will be installed. Solar for All now heads to the Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Communications.

Strela Cervas, Coordinator of CEJA, says that “Solar for All would put the people who are suffering the most in the current recession to work installing renewable energy right where they live. For too long, low-income communities and communities of color have been left out of renewable energy development. The Assembly floor vote takes us one step closer to ensuring that California’s clean energy future benefits everyone.”

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ABOUT CEJA: The California Environmental Justice Alliance is a statewide coalition of community-based groups working to achieve environmental justice by organizing in low-income communities and communities of color – those most impacted by environmental hazards – and pushing for statewide policies that protect public health and the environment. Our members are: Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment, Communities for a Better Environment, Environmental Health Coalition, and People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights. For more information, please visit: [www.caleja.org](http://www.caleja.org)

ABOUT EHC: Founded in 1980, Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) builds grassroots campaigns to confront the unjust consequences of toxic pollution,

discriminatory land use, and unsustainable energy policies. Visit us online at <http://www.environmentalhealth.org>.