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New Analysis: Equity in San Diego/Tijuana Defines Economic Growth in Region

Environmental Health Coalition says analysis shows that local policy must empower low-income communities

SAN DIEGO, July 29, 2015—Today, the University of Southern California Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) released a report assessing the factors currently inhibiting economic growth in the San Diego region. The analysis suggests broad strategies to overcome the region's most dire equity and environmental issues, weaving a common theme throughout: bringing together regional influences to implement strategic action. According to the report, "these conversations can lead to smarter, long-term and more affordable solutions to social issues."

[Environmental Health Coalition \(EHC\)](#), an organization fighting toxic pollution in the San Diego/Tijuana region, has spent 35 years empowering residents of low-income communities to have a voice in the decision-making that affects their livelihood and future. EHC says today's report reinforces the necessity of policies, investments and infrastructure that give all communities the equal opportunity to thrive.

"This report is a strong call for environmental and social justice in San Diego and Tijuana," said EHC Executive Director Diane Takvorian. "Only when we acknowledge and address the existing disparities in San Diego can we all prosper."

Today's analysis, *Linking Innovation with Inclusion: Demography, Equity and the Future of San Diego*, begins by highlighting the region's shifting demography, economy and geography, followed by a section providing theoretical and policy framework for necessary action and offering a set of broad principles and policies that can create a stronger infrastructure for opportunity and growth.

The report's recommendations to unite the San Diego/Tijuana region under a common vision align seamlessly with EHC's efforts in the region, including:

- **Improved accessibility and affordability of the region's transportation system:** *Prioritizing equity, transit and active transportation in the regional transportation plan and expanding mobility options and accessibility for low-income workers.*
- **Reduced environmental burdens and increased sustainable economic opportunities in low-income communities:** *Developing capacity among low-income residents to participate in planning and land-use decision-making and transforming pollution hot spots into healthy communities through implementation of green zones.*
- **Increased civic engagement among emerging populations:** *Building a culture of civic participation and pursuing the naturalization of eligible immigrants and investing in leadership development.*

The report reads, "The distribution of environmental burdens in San Diego mirrors geographic patterns of racial and income disparities. Civic leaders are beginning to recognize the connection between reducing environmental inequities and environmental quality for all."

“This new report from one of the nation’s leading research institutions underscores the need for local governments to end discriminatory land use practices and adopt ambitious climate and transportation policies,” says Takvorian. “Healthy and sustainable communities with abundant economic opportunities must be the future for our region.”

[Click here](#) to read the full report released today by the USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity. For more information on Environmental Health Coalition and its efforts to reduce toxic pollution in the San Diego/Tijuana region, visit www.environmentalhealth.org.

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION: 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>.