

July 14, 2022

The Honorable Jeffrey N. Roy  
House Chair, Joint Committee on  
Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy  
State House Room 42

The Honorable Michael J. Barrett  
Senate Chair, Joint Committee on  
Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy  
State House Room 109D

The Honorable Tackey Chan  
House Chair, Joint Committee on Consumer  
Protection and Professional Licensure  
State House Room 43

The Honorable Cynthia S. Creem  
Senate Majority Leader  
State House Room 312A

The Honorable Bradley H. Jones, Jr.  
House Minority Leader  
State House Room 124

The Honorable Bruce E. Tarr  
Senate Minority Leader  
State House Room 308

Subject: Support from Environmental Justice Table for Air Quality Provisions of  
S.2842, Section 76

Dear Honorable Members of the Conference Committee:

We write as The Massachusetts Environmental Justice Table, a coalition of organizations working to achieve environmental justice (EJ). We acknowledge that tackling the climate crisis and addressing the inequities of our Commonwealth's environment are not easy tasks and appreciate your leadership on these complex issues.

This session we have focused on improving air quality in the Commonwealth by supporting S.1447 and H.2230, collectively, the "Air Quality Bill." The Air Quality Bill is a bold, yet necessary step to advance environmental justice and public health equity.

We support Section 76 of S.2842, which requires the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to convene an air quality technical advisory committee and expand air monitoring for ultrafine particles. That section also requires MassDEP to file a report recommending ways to reduce air pollution in pollution corridors and hotspots by 2030. We urge the conference committee to require MassDEP to require air pollution improvements instead of simply filing a report with recommendations by June 30, 2024. We further recommend incorporating language from H.2230/S.1447 on improving indoor air quality.

In Massachusetts, expanded air monitoring for fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and ultrafine PM is necessary for the state to determine baseline conditions and track improved air quality trends. On average, residents of color in Massachusetts are exposed to pollution from vehicle emissions that are 26 to 36 percent higher than the rate of exposure to white residents.<sup>1</sup> Studies have shown that even if we implement policies designed to lower emissions from transportation, disparities in air quality in pollution hotspots will continue to persist in 2032.<sup>2</sup> These findings should be a clarion call to decision-makers: Massachusetts must take proactive steps now to mitigate inequities and improve air quality for EJ populations and communities on the frontlines of pollution. However, the Commonwealth currently lacks sufficient baseline data to even begin to address this inequity and prevent further harm.

We urge the conference committee to expand air monitoring and require air quality improvements in air pollution hotspots to strengthen S.2842, Senate amendment to the House Bill advancing offshore wind and clean energy (House, No. 4524).

If you have questions or need more information, please reach out to Andrea Nyamekye, [andrea@n2nma.org](mailto:andrea@n2nma.org), Maria Belen Power, [mariabelenp@greenrootschelsea.org](mailto:mariabelenp@greenrootschelsea.org), or Sofia Owen, [sofia@ace-ej.org](mailto:sofia@ace-ej.org).

Sincerely,

Members of the Massachusetts Environmental Justice Table:

Alternatives for Community & Environment

Coalition for Social Justice

GreenRoots

Neighbor to Neighbor

North American Indian Center of Boston

Clean Water Action

Conservation Law Foundation

Environmental League of Massachusetts

Green Energy Consumers Alliance

Groundwork Lawrence

Lawyers for Civil Rights

Union of Concerned Scientists

Unitarian Universalist Mass Action

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<sup>1</sup> Maria Cecilia Pinto de Moura, David Reichmuth, Union of Concerned Scientists, “Inequitable Exposure to Air Pollution from Vehicles in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic,” (June 21, 2019), available at [Inequitable Exposure to Air Pollution from Vehicles | Union of Concerned Scientists \(ucsusa.org\)](https://www.ucsusa.org/air-quality/air-pollution-from-vehicles/in-equitable-exposure-to-air-pollution-from-vehicles).

<sup>2</sup> Transportation, Equity, Climate & Health Project, Preliminary Results – Updated February 25, 2021, slides 7, 25 (February 25, 2021), available at <https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2343/2021/02/TRECH-SlidedeckUpdateFeb2021.pdf>.