

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of the State of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request to Suspend implementation of the Global Warming Act of 2006 and Associated Implementing Legislation

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

We the Board of Supervisors of Riverside County respectfully submit this Resolution requesting that you immediately suspend implementation of State Assembly Bill 32 and associated implementing legislation, such as Senate Bill 375 (2008, Steinberg), until the Riverside County unemployment rate is again below 6%. This request is consistent with and appropriate pursuant to that section of AB 32 which provides that you have the authority to "adjust the applicable deadlines...for the state in aggregate" in the "event of extraordinary circumstances, catastrophic events, or threat of significant economic harm."

Riverside County has established a credible leadership role in protecting the environment and providing frameworks for sustainable development and fully supports the goals of AB 32 and its implementing legislation. While providing the housing needed for Southern California, Riverside County has led the way in acknowledging a commitment to the environment for future generations, with the development some of the first and largest Multi Species Habitat Conservation Plans (MSHCPs). The General Plan adopted in 2003 is widely acknowledged and recognized for its innovative concepts in land use planning, with the inclusion of framework transit oriented and multi-use development strategies. Many of the strategies and outcomes arising from AB32 and its related regulations and policies mirror both growing trends in local development and local planning efforts predating that regulation. Riverside County is processing master planned communities that incorporate the higher densities, promotes walkable communities and provide transit linkages that foster public transportation, which in turn reduces vehicle miles traveled, creates health Communities and improves air quality.

However, at the time AB 32 was signed, the unemployment rate in California was 4.8% and 5.0% in Riverside County. In the subsequent four years, the State has been hit by a global recession of a severity surpassed only by the Great Depression of the 1930's. California's unemployment rate, currently 12.1%, is now nearly triple that of 2006. In Riverside County unemployment is currently at 14.3% and in San Bernardino County it is at 13.6% (EDD, January 2010). These rates exceed even the 10.0% rate of the US as a whole and clearly indicate economic difficulties for the residents of Riverside County and the entire State of California.

The Inland Empire has been an epicenter for economic losses associated with the collapse of the housing industry nationwide. Since 2006, the median home price in Riverside County has declined 60% and forecasts for 2010 estimate additional losses. This loss in assessed values has lead to significant cuts in the amount of property tax revenues collected by local cities and counties, particularly in the Inland Empire. In addition, the concurrent severe drop in construction activities for both residential and commercial structures throughout the region have also lead to significant job losses and severe drops in the generation of impact fees and building permit fees that provide revenue to local governments.