

March 14, 2018

The Honorable Connie Leyva
California State Senate
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1072 – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Leyva:

On behalf of urban and community forestry groups across California charged with greening our Golden State, we are writing to offer our strong support for Senate Bill 1072, which creates the Regional Climate Collaborative Program to support local capacity-building and technical assistance.

As one of California's leading nonprofit organizations providing GGRF dollars directly to community groups in underserved area across the state, California ReLeaf is keenly aware of the need to provide direct technical assistance to those entities clearly committed to improving their communities but lacking in capacity. Since 2015, we have allocated nearly one million dollars from the GGRF to twenty organizations – 75% of which required direct technical assistance to make their grant applications eligible for consideration.

This important measure takes technical assistance to another level by creating a program through the Strategic Growth Council to support regional climate collaboratives. These locally-based, multi-partner collaboratives will further a long-term strategy to support local planning, capacity-building, and application assistance to ensure that under-resourced communities have access to climate investments.

Authentic community engagement can only occur through the direct participation and buy-in from community leaders. They are integral to building trust between the State and the residents of each underserved area. These regional climate collaboratives will serve as the boots on the ground to assist with multiple activities while simultaneously closing a chasm between available state funds and the under-resourced area that need these funds most.

We applaud your efforts to date to ensure these communities are not left behind in this important discussion, and are pleased to support Senate Bill 1072.

Sincerely,