

March 29, 2024

Port of Oakland
530 Water Street
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: Letter of support for the Port of Oakland's Application to the 2024 EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant

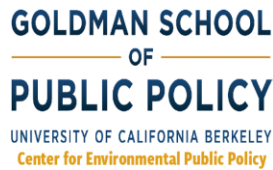
Dear Port of Oakland Staff:

On behalf of Earthjustice, the Goldman School of Public Policy at University of California, Berkeley, and Pacific Environment, we wish to express our strong support for the Port of Oakland's grant application: *Transforming Power: Advancing Zero Emission Cargo Handling Equipment with Infrastructure at the Port of Oakland* (Project) in response to EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program.

West Oakland – the frontline neighborhood next door to the Port – is the first community in the state to create and implement a Community Air Action Plan certified by the State of California under Assembly Bill 617 to mitigate serious pollution at the local level. Diesel-powered cargo handling equipment at the Port of Oakland is a significant source of both local health-harming air pollution, and globally harmful greenhouse gas emissions. With the support of the \$75.7 million grant funding request for this critical Project, the federal government will make a meaningful difference reducing exposure in an area of the state most impacted by freight pollution and the climate crisis, and help advance the transition to zero-emissions operations long demanded by frontline communities like West Oakland.

The Project will allow the Port to advance its strategic vision of fully decarbonizing Port activities. Specifically, this Project will install and improve critical infrastructure to the Port's electrical distribution grid, including upgraded substations, circuits, and other gear to accommodate anticipated increases in power usage in the coming years. This work builds on ongoing efforts by the Port to proactively plan for the transition to zero-emissions equipment, including the adoption of a first-of-its-kind environmental ordinance that requires tenants to submit equipment transition plans. As of early 2024, all Port tenants have now submitted plans that express strong interest in battery-electric cargo handling equipment and supporting infrastructure. As a result, this Project utilizes the most up-to-date planning data from the Port and its industry partners to accelerate a transition that must urgently begin to electrify yard trucks and other equipment.

As one of the largest direct and indirect contributors to emissions in the Bay Area, the Port of Oakland has been a member of the West Oakland Community Air Action Plan Steering

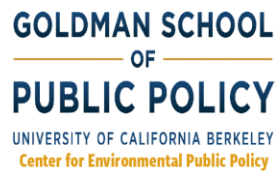


Committee since its inception. It therefore helped develop the 89 strategies identified in the Plan to improve air quality and reduce environmental injustice in West Oakland. Of these 89 strategies, at least 11 require leadership or co-leadership by the Port for successful implementation – and several of these could be directly addressed through this Project. We strongly suggest that if the EPA awards this funding to the Port of Oakland, it ensures that the roll-out of the grant is coordinated with AB 617 implementation, and funding is allocated in a way that aligns directly with the relevant Strategies.

In addition, we call on EPA to help confirm that the Port will comply with Title VI requirements and that community partners, particularly West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project (WOEIP), should have decisionmaking input on any third-party community engagement activities, including the hiring of any community engagement liaisons or facilitators. WOEIP and our community partners should be fairly compensated for any time spent helping the Port successfully implement this Project in the future, as referenced in the "Task 2.0 – Stakeholder Engagement" section of the Port's application. WOEIP and West Oakland residents must be included as partners to ensure that environmental justice is being carried out in collaboration with the Port of Oakland and other government agencies and stakeholders.

Our groups have worked in close partnership with the Port for several years on zero-emissions and decarbonization planning. This Project – and the additional recommendations included in this letter – reflect specific proposals and ongoing feedback shared in that space to ensure environmental justice for frontline communities and an accelerated transition of the Port's diesel equipment to zero-emissions technology. We strongly support this grant application as an important pillar in this work, and a meaningful step toward improving public health and climate protection in one of the most vulnerable communities in the country.

We appreciate EPA's consideration of the requested investment in this Project. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.



Sincerely,

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