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February 17, 2022

**Re: Comments Regarding the I-710 Task Force Charter**

Dear Metro and Caltrans Leadership:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and members of the Coalition for Environmental Health & Justice (“CEHAJ”), this letter provides comments regarding the upcoming vote on the I-710 South Corridor Task Force’s (“Task Force”) Charter, scheduled for February 17, 2022.

**Comment #1: The version of the Charter scheduled to be presented to the Task Force for vote on February 17, 2022 has not been reviewed by the Community Leadership Committee (“CLC”), which is a required step as presented in the Charter.**

Over the last several months, Metro staff have released a number of draft charters summarizing a proposed community engagement strategy and decision-making structure. These draft charters were reviewed by the Charter Work Group on 11/22/21 & 1/24/22 where participants proposed changes in the spirit of the Task Force’s mission. However, one week before the February 17, 2022

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Task Force meeting, a version of the charter that has never been reviewed by the Charter Work Group was included. There is no summary of the changes made between this version and the versions reviewed by the Charter Work Group, nor a summary of which portions were objectionable to work group participants for Task Force members' informed consideration. In fact, the Charter Work Group participants, which consist of at least one CEHAJ member, do not recall having a consensus vote to agree upon a specific version of the charter to be presented to the Task Force, at all. We can only assume this version of the Charter was "finalized" by Metro staff, which is not a valid step within the consensus building process.

Additionally, CEHAJ was under the impression that any proposal submitted for Task Force vote must flow through the CLC for final sign off, which is not the case for this version of the Charter. We ask that Metro staff explain this diversion from the agreed upon procedure, and provide an explanation or summary of the changes made between the last draft reviewed by the Charter Work Group and the one being presented to the Task Force. We also ask that any vote by the Task Force on the Charter not be a vote for approval, but is a vote either to (1) approve the charter to be presented to the CLC for further review, or (2) return to the Charter Work Group to approve the final contents of the proposal.

**Comment #2: The Charter does not state that the CLC has autonomy to create proposals without direction or control of Metro staff.**

We understand that the Task Force has numerous decisions to make before a final report can be presented to the Metro Board to move forward with an I-710 Corridor Project. Over the last three Task Force meetings, Metro staff explained that the CLC would have the ability to create and present proposals, at the direction of the Task Force to usher this long process along, even if a Work Group is not created to facilitate that specific decision point. However, it is not clear if the CLC can exercise this autonomy without Metro staff interference. If this process is meant to prioritize community voices and adopt the best practices from the prior 710 processes, it is imperative that the CLC have autonomy in the topics to be discussed and recommended to the Task Force in the space within the 710 project area. We ask that a statement on this autonomy is added to the Charter to remove any ambiguity in the future.

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We appreciate your consideration of the issues raised in this letter and look forward to our continued partnership and collaboration.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Betancourt  
**Long Beach Alliance for Children With Asthma**

Laura Cortez  
**East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice**

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Cc: Metro Board of Directors