

Building Energy, Equity & Power (BEEP)
Coalition: **Findings from Statewide Listening
Sessions**

Presentation to the AB 32 Environmental Justice Advisory Committee
April 26, 2022



What is the BEEP Coalition?

The BEEP Coalition represents environmental justice communities in various parts of California.

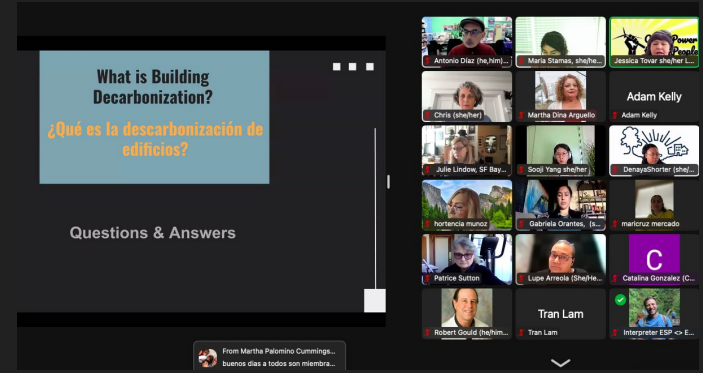
Our mission is to ensure low-income consumers and consumers of color benefit, and are not adversely impacted by, building decarbonization efforts in California.

We formed for a simple reason: ***low-income communities and communities of color are being left behind in conversations about building decarbonization.***

Statewide Listening Sessions

We hosted five virtual listening sessions in:

- East Coachella Valley
- Los Angeles
- San Joaquin Valley (2)
- San Francisco Bay Area



More than **200 residents** attended and shared their input. And from these sessions, we developed a Preliminary Report summarizing what we heard and sent this to state agencies and decision-makers.

Preliminary Report Summary

1. Equitable Process + Meaningful Engagement

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>Low-income communities and communities of color are often excluded from policy and programmatic policies on decarbonization, lack information on major projects and developments, and have difficult trusting programs that do not have community input from inception to evaluation.</p>	<p>Dedicate sufficient time and provide sufficient funding to local groups to engage in outreach and community education, including funding for staff time from established community organizations, stipends for community member participation, and translation services.</p>

2. Access + Education

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>Lack of culturally appropriate and multilingual educational efforts about building decarbonization risks and opportunities. Programs are not tailored or designed to meet multiple needs, oftentimes excluding low-income communities, immigrants, and communities of color.</p>	<p>Fund local groups to build accessible and reliable programs that support outreach and education on building decarbonization. Embrace a flexible, phased approach to implementation.</p>

3. Distributional Justice: Costs + Affordability

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>Cost presents a significant barrier to adoption. Many households cannot afford the transition, or are ineligible for incentives or funding currently available.</p>	<p>Fully fund building decarbonization and debt relief programs for low-income communities and communities of color to reduce energy burdens and remove cost barriers. Energy costs should go down after projects are complete, and low-income households should not have to pay anything out of pocket. Educate ratepayers on cost impacts and best practices for energy use.</p>

4. Renters' Rights + Protections

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>Majority of low-income Californians are renters, spending more than one-third of their income on rent and utility bills every month, and thus vulnerable to evictions and displacement. There is concern that renters will not access the programs, or will become more vulnerable when landlords pass down costs of decarbonization to renters by increasing rent and property value.</p>	<p>Work with local tenant rights groups to embed renter safeguards in every building decarbonization policy and program, and clearly identify enforcement mechanisms and resources. Close loopholes in state law on this issue.</p>

5. Regulated Affordable Housing

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>There is a lack of funding and staff capacity to plan, design, and pay for all-electric new construction or make decarbonizing retrofits in existing deed-restricted affordable housing buildings. Affordable housing providers also often face difficulty in navigating funding streams for all-electric developments and retrofits.</p>	<p>Provide funding for more training, education, technical assistance, and financial incentives (e.g. align Tax Credit Allocation Committee funding with state sustainability goals) for affordable housing providers to implement decarbonization in new and existing buildings.</p>

6. Workforce Development + High-Road Jobs

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>Job quality of electrification and decarbonization work to-date is more reflective of a low-road vs high-road approach due to lack of focus on workforce development and high-quality job creation. Reductions in natural gas use and development will impact many union jobs.</p>	<p>Ensure job access for local and priority populations underrepresented in high-road construction jobs, such as through community workforce agreements. Include water efficiency in policy changes to facilitate meaningful job development in impacted sectors.</p>

7. Holistic Upgrades: Health, Safety, + Resiliency

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>Many homes and apartments simultaneously need energy efficiency upgrades and other upgrades to accommodate building decarbonization technologies and to ensure cost savings after a project is completed.</p>	<p>Take a holistic approach to building decarbonization policy and program design by packaging it with energy efficiency, indoor habitability, and resiliency measures; and expand critical programs that offer energy efficiency and solar PV at no cost.</p>

8. Supply Chain: Gas Infrastructure + Lithium Extraction

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<p>Both retiring the gas infrastructure and extracting lithium may present serious impacts on public health and the environment if not properly studied, managed, and communicated to nearby communities who are mostly low-income communities and communities of color.</p>	<p>Ensure thoughtful recycling and clean-up of retiring gas infrastructure, and conduct thorough research about the short-term and long-term impacts of lithium extraction in the Salton Sea and communicate these findings to frontline communities.</p>

Current BEEP Activities

- Working with the California Air Resources Board to incorporate the Preliminary Report findings into the Scoping Plan and the State Implementation Plan
 - Specific Requests to CARB:
 - Include broad vision of equitable building decarbonization in Scoping Plan
 - Convene an interagency working group
 - Outline “loading order” for policies:
 - Immediate fossil fuel reductions and renewable energy investments
 - Community engagement and housing protections FIRST – before any indoor air quality or appliance standards
 - Identify funding for improvements
 - Work in partnership with trusted community partners
- Advocating to the California State Legislature Budget Committee to prioritize the state’s ~\$1B budget for building decarbonization towards low-income communities of color.

Thank you! 😊