



Gov. Jerry Brown signs 'toughest' restrictions on pollutants in Long Beach

Governor Edmund Brown made an appearance in Long Beach to sign SB1383 which establishes restrictions on “super pollutants” Monday, September 19, 2016, Long Beach, CA. Scientists believe that cutting super pollutants world wide will aid in an immediate slowing of global warming. The bill was introduced by Senator Ricardo Lara, left. Also pictured are Assemblymember Susan Eggman, center, Senator Isadore Hall, right. Photo by Steve McCrank, Daily Breeze/SCNG

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Gov. Jerry Brown Monday signed into law a bill imposing what he called the nation’s toughest restrictions on “super pollutants” such as black carbon, fluorinated gases and methane. If followed worldwide, these acts would help cut the projected rate of global warming in half by 2050.

“Cutting black carbon and other super pollutants is the critical next step in our program to combat climate change,” Brown said at the event, held near a Long Beach playground in the shadow of an oil refinery. “This bill curbs dangerous pollutants and thereby protects public health and slows climate change.”

SB 1383, authored by Sen. Ricardo Lara, D-Bell Gardens, mandates a 50 percent reduction in black carbon, and 40 percent reduction in methane and hydrofluorocarbon from 2013 levels by 2030. The pollutants are generated by sources including waste-disposal, petroleum-based fuel, agriculture and synthetic gases used in refrigeration, air conditioning and aerosol products.

Professor Veerabhadran Ramanathan, a scientist at Scripps Institute of Oceanography who has been studying climate change for 43 years, said California has “thrown a lifeline” to its people and to the rest of the planet through this legislation.

“Cutting down one ton of diesel black carbon emissions will have the same cooling effect as cutting down 2,000 tons of carbon dioxide,” he said on Monday.

After describing the pollutants as “powerful climate forcers that have a profound effect on climate change and global warming,” Lara explained his motivation for crafting the law, one tied more closely to home.

“Yes, climate change is bad for polar bears and penguins and we must do everything to protect them,” he said, “however, climate change, pollution and air quality are having a devastating impact on the lives of children growing up right here in our own backyard.”

“It’s a region identified by federal air quality standards as one of the worst in the entire nation,” Lara said. “This bill represents a unique opportunity to balance our global vision for the future with a much more local and immediate perspective.”

Assemblywoman Susan Talamantes Eggman, D-Stockton, whose district includes parts of the agriculturally-dependent Central Valley, said on Monday that the bill ensures that dairy has a “voice in its own future.” The bill sets aside \$50 million to help tackle the dairy methane issue over the next year.

The California Climate and Agriculture Network, a coalition that focuses on policy related to climate change and sustainable agriculture, did not take a stance on the bill because the group says it represents the priorities and perspectives of only one segment of California diverse dairy industry.

The National Federation of Independent Business also criticized the legislation, with the organization state director Tom Scott saying it creates an inconsistent policy that will further increase the cost of doing business in California, particularly for the agricultural industry.

The mandated reductions represent a direct assault on California dairy industry and will hurt manufacturing by creating an arbitrary limit on natural gases which dissipate quickly, he said.