

**A Letter and Action Plan
for Racial Change at the
California Air Resources Board**

“This country has been unconscious,
and it’s got to awake.”

Charles Alston

“If we are going to be part of the solution,
we have to engage the problems.”

Majora Carter

“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.”

Ida B. Wells

“Not everything that is faced can be changed,
but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

James Baldwin

“If you make conditions better for the Black people around you,
you will inevitably make them better for everyone else.”

Ruth Tyson

Table of Contents

Who We Are	1
Why Are We Speaking Up?.....	1
Being Black at CARB – Black Stories.....	1
1. Hiring Practices	2
2. Micro-Aggressions.....	3
3. Black Representation	5
4. Lack of Support for Black Employees	6
What Comes Next – An Action Plan for Black Lives at CARB	7
1. Pay Attention.....	8
2. Create a Culture of Allyship.....	8
3. Be Actively Anti-Racist	9
4. Increase Black Representation through Hiring and Promoting Black People	9
5. Support Black Employees and Encourage Black Excellence	10
6. Appoint Black People to the Executive Office and CARB Board	10
7. Pay Black Employees Equal to Our White Counterparts.....	11
8. Overhaul “Diversity and Inclusion” Training	11
9. Create a Racial Equity Committee or Task Force at CARB	11
10. Affirm Black Life.....	12
The Work Begins – Next Steps	12

Who We Are

We are a group of concerned Black employees at the California Air Resources Board (CARB). We are Millennials, Generation X'ers, and Baby Boomers, with individual years of experience ranging from 2 years to 30 years.

Why Are We Speaking Up?

The murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, began a long overdue nationwide discussion about race and the Black experience in the United States. Discussions are taking place every day around the nation, and the world, about the myriad of ways Black lives are under attack in every facet of life. We have written this letter and action plan as our contribution to these discussions. Our intention is to highlight systemic racism and implicit bias at CARB through sharing stories of our lived experiences. We have also included an action plan with concrete ways to begin the hard work of supporting and healing the wounds of Black employees at CARB. In many instances we may indicate “white”, but Black employees at CARB also experience discrimination from other non-Black people of color (POC). Our goal is not to shame or belittle CARB, or to assign blame. However, it is important to bring these issues into the light, so we can spread awareness, and address harmful behaviors, structures, and practices.

We hope our words will encourage deep reflection, growth, and meaningful transformation concerning the culture of white privilege in our workplace and our country. CARB and other government agencies are increasingly using terms like “equity”, “diversity”, and “environmental justice” without recognizing the importance of having a workforce that reflects these principles. We are speaking up because we believe that Black employees must play a critical role if CARB truly believes in the pursuit of equity, diversity, and environmental justice.

Being Black at CARB – Black Stories

Below you will find a compilation of Black stories about our experiences at CARB along with the messages we received from those experiences. Although these stories are first person accounts of experiences, we believe that most of them apply (or have applied) to all Black employees at some point during their time at CARB. Before we begin, we would like to acknowledge and emphasize the other non-Black POC who also experience systemic racism and oppression as a result of white privilege in the workplace. Although Black employees also experience discrimination from non-Black POC, we acknowledge their suffering and the stories they have to share. However, the stories highlighted here will be Black stories from our lived experiences.

Read. Remember. Internalize. Do Better.

1. Hiring Practices

- When I applied to CARB, I submitted my resume using my first name rather than my middle name, which is my preferred name. I was afraid my resume would not be considered if I used my middle name because my middle name is too ethnic.

Message: Black careers and Black goals do not have value. CARB does not take any steps to guard against the implicit bias of hiring managers screening out resumes with Black or African-sounding names. As a result, qualified Black candidates are denied opportunities to succeed. CARB's inaction on this issue communicates that CARB is not interested in increasing Black representation within the agency.

- I had to petition ASD for higher/equal pay after learning that another employee with the same level of education and less experience than I had, was offered a higher starting salary than I was offered. To receive the higher salary, I was required to take a three-hour written exam and a one-hour oral exam, of which I had to rank in the top three. The other employee was not required to do any of these things. While I passed all the extra hoops to receive equal pay, I felt that I was treated unfairly because I am a Black woman.

Message: Black minds, Black experience, and Black achievements are not worthy of proper compensation. CARB advocates for white and non-Black POC employees but Black employees have to advocate for themselves.

- Black employees have been repeatedly passed over for promotions. Two examples of this are outline below. In both cases, these employees had demonstrated their knowledge and experience over extensive careers at CARB.
 - A fellow Black employee was passed over for a promotion he was more than qualified for in favor of a white candidate who was much less qualified for the job, but was well-liked by management.
 - A fellow Black employee was repeatedly not hired for SAPS or management positions after proving his vast expertise on numerous occasions. This Black employee had a wealth of institutional knowledge and experience. He was regularly consulted on projects and asked to train staff and managers who were hired in-lieu of him.

Message: Black careers and Black qualifications will always be seen as less than. CARB does not recognize or value the contributions of Black employees, no matter how much knowledge or experience we possess.

- A Black male engineering Ph.D. candidate living on the East Coast applied for a job at CARB a few years ago. While he was extended an interview, he was required to purchase an expensive airline ticket to California for the interview. His request for a phone or video interview was denied. He really wanted to work for CARB, so he purchased the ticket and paid for one night of hotel, plus transportation. Unfortunately, he was not offered a job at CARB. The hiring manager indicated that he ranked number two. After several attempts applying for jobs at CARB with no success, the applicant focused his interest

on another organization on the East Coast. CARB normally offers out of state applicants the opportunity to have a phone or video interview but that policy was not adhered to in the case.

Message: Black candidates are not interviewed fairly at CARB and are not extended the same opportunities as non-Black applicants. CARB is not invested in increasing Black representation within the agency with qualified Black employees.

2. Micro-Aggressions

- Whenever I wear my natural hair to work, my white colleagues constantly try to touch it. Most people touch my hair without asking for permission. In one instance, a coworker did ask before touching my hair but then proceeded to place her hands on my hair before I could say “no”.

Message: Black bodies, Black space, Black boundaries, and Black words are not deserving of respect.

- People often have trouble pronouncing my middle name, which is my preferred name. On more than one occasion, people have ignored my preference and addressed me by my first name because it was easier for them to pronounce. Rather than attempting to learn how to pronounce my preferred name, my white colleagues disregarded my wishes and chose the route that was most convenient for them. In other instances, white colleagues simply pronounced my middle name incorrectly and refused to change when corrected.

Message: Black identities, Black preferences, and Black desires are not respected or valued.

- Being the “token Black person” in nine out of 10 rooms.

Message: Black bodies are “other” and do not belong in this space.

- I have to fit in a box, act a certain way, and make myself smaller to be accepted. I have been told multiple times over the years that I talk or laugh too loudly and have had my interactions with other Black employees monitored by white employees. Two examples of this are outlined below:
 - Three Black employees (one manager, two staff) were having a conversation in the aisle. It was early in the morning, not many people were around, and we were not loud. A white employee rudely approached us and said we were speaking loudly. The Black manager reported the white employees’ rude behavior to their white manager, and the white manager simply laughed in response.
 - A Black employee was discussing a topic at a meeting between CARB staff and an equipment manufacturer. These meetings can often get very animated. The Black employee was told by their manager that they were speaking too loudly and to “tone it down”, even though the employee had used the same tone on multiple occasions. Later on in the meeting, the manager proceeded to raise their voice to the same level that the Black employee had used earlier in the meeting.

Message: Black joy, Black personalities, and Black voices should be suppressed and are only acceptable when modified to maintain/cater to the comfort of others.

- During meetings, I have been interrupted repeatedly and spoken to in a condescending fashion that does not happen when white employees make similar remarks. If I refuse to be disrespected and ask that I be allowed to finish speaking without interruption, I am considered to be rude and difficult.

Message: The contributions of Black employees do not deserve the same respect and consideration as those of white employees. Black employees are unable to advocate for themselves without being perceived as aggressive.

- White and non-Black POC often confuse the identities of Black employees and call us by one another's names.

Message: The erasure of Black identities and Black personalities is acceptable at CARB. This communicates that Black individualism is not worthy of respect and perpetuates the stereotype of "all Black people look alike".

- I was in a meeting in which I was the highest ranking person in the room and the only person of color. A white subordinate severely chastised me for a presumed slight to one of their employees on a previous occasion. The presumed slight occurred when I directed my staff to assist their staff on an issue. After the meeting, my white subordinate was crying in the hallway, upset over the way they behaved toward me during the meeting. I was forced to comfort the subordinate who had insulted and disrespected me.

Message: It is acceptable to disrespect Black employees at CARB, regardless of their stature or rank. Even Black employees in management positions, with roles that demand additional respect from subordinates, are not given the respect they are due. In addition, Black employees are expected to comfort and/or validate their white aggressors when confrontations occur.

- I attended a Board meeting where a white employee physically threatened a non-Black Environmental Justice (EJ) leader of color. The white employee challenged the EJ leader to a fight because he did not like the testimony that the EJ leader gave during the Board meeting. After leaving the Board meeting, I found the white employee in the hallway crying over the confrontation he had instigated and I was forced to comfort him. This is the same white employee from the bullet above who showed blatant disrespect toward me in the past.

Message: White employees view violence and aggression toward POC as acceptable and part of the status quo at CARB. POC are expected to comfort and/or reassure their white aggressors.

- As a Black employee in EJ, I am constantly asked to be a mediator between CARB staff and EJ leaders outside the agency because white (and in some cases, non-Black POC) CARB staff are not comfortable speaking to them directly. *Message:* White employees at CARB believe Black and non-Black POC employees are best equipped to approach EJ leaders. They believe that because we share the same skin color, we "speak their language". This

- perpetuates the stereotype that POC, particularly Black people, are difficult, aggressive, inarticulate, and unprofessional.
- During EJ coordination and outreach, there are constant attempts by CARB staff to discredit EJ leaders of color that they believe are too “difficult”.
Message: EJ leaders of color, and by extension all POC, are difficult, uneducated, and do not deserve a seat at the table. The lived experiences of EJ leaders of color are considered illegitimate. CARB is not invested/interested in authentic engagement, and prefers to take a “band-aid” approach to EJ issues rather than a holistic one.
 - In El Monte, a white employee called security on a Black male employee who was waiting for a ride from a coworker. The white employee claimed the Black employee was breaking into cars or was otherwise up to no good, neither of which were true. Knowing how Black men are perceived, the Black male employee had previously made a point of getting to know security staff in case something like this ever happened. Since the security guards knew the Black employee, they did not take the next step of calling the police. However, this situation could easily have escalated into a life-threatening encounter with police, had the Black male employee not had the foresight to prepare for this exact situation.
Message: Black bodies are aggressive and “other”, and do not belong at CARB. Black bodies, especially Black males, are perceived as threatening and making trouble simply for existing. Black employees must constantly be on their guard and go out of their way to appear non-threatening to white employees.

3. Black Representation

- When I was working at CARB in 2010, there were only two other Black people on my floor. Four years later, I changed divisions and moved to another floor where I was pleasantly surprised to encounter the largest number of Black people I had ever seen at CARB; there were 10 of us – 2 managers, 1 Staff Air Pollution Specialist (SAPS), 2 Air Pollution Specialists (APS), 1 Air Resources Engineer (ARE), and 4 Executive Assistants.
Message: CARB is not invested in promoting diversity and uplifting Black careers or Black minds. Black bodies do not belong in this space.
- In 2010, all of the executive assistants on the sixth floor were Black women and most of the executives were white men.
Message: Black people can be hired to serve as assistants, office technicians, and analysts but will not be hired or promoted as specialists, engineers, managers, chiefs, executives, or Board members.
- Trying to seek out mentorship options available for Black employees and finding out there were none.
Message: CARB does not value Black representation, Black growth, and Black advancement.

To reinforce the stories we have shared, we have included a table below with recent data from the [CalHR Departmental Demographic Reports](#) showing Black representation at CARB. We are not able to show historical data on Black representation because we do not have access to demographic data prior to 2017. As of June 2020, Black employees make up only 4.5% of the workforce at CARB, and nearly half of those employees are in lower classifications within the agency. According to the [United States Census Bureau](#), Black people made up 6.5% of the California population in 2019. Comparing CARB's demographic data to this census data, Black representation at CARB is disproportionately low.

Table 1. Black Representation at CARB in 2020^{1,2,3}

Year	CARB Employees	Number of Black Employees at CARB					
		Total	Executive	Management ²	SAPS	APS/ARE ³	Other Staff
2020	1627	73	1	8	2	29	33

1. The data in this table comes from the biannual 5102 Departmental Report - Demographic Data of State Employees by Occupational Group and Classification dated June 30, 2020.
2. Management includes the following classifications: Air Resources Supervisor I (5), Air Resources Supervisor II (2), and Division Chief (1).
3. APS/ARE representation is as follows: APS (19), ARE (10).

4. Lack of Support for Black Employees

- Many times during my time at CARB, I have seen the surprise on white colleagues' faces when they meet me in person and find out I am Black, after only speaking to me over the phone. On multiple occasions, I have been told that I am extremely well-spoken and articulate for a Black person. White colleagues sometimes trail off right before saying "Black person" because they realize how racist their statements are partway through speaking. I have also been told that I could pass as white and that I am an oreo (Black on the outside but white on the inside).
Message: White bodies are superior to Black bodies. Black people are less intelligent and any good traits we embody are inherently white.
- I have been forced to develop another staff member hired at the same time as me and have been held responsible for their shortcomings. My efforts to develop this staff person were not well-received and they refused to implement my suggestions. After a while, it became clear that my colleague was not going to change or improve the quality of their work without direction from our manager. When I brought this to the attention of my white manager and asked for assistance, I was told that I was the problem, that my standards were too high, and that the problems were all in my head. This led to increased stress and anxiety, and being responsible for doing extensive review of my coworker's work prior to management review, in addition to my own workload. When I brought this to my white manager's attention a second

time, I was told to stop complaining.

Message: Black concerns, Black struggles, and Black mental health are not valid or worthy of consideration.

- I am constantly held to a higher standard than my white colleagues and I continually have to prove and defend my excellence, abilities, and proven track record. Additionally, I often have my minor mistakes highlighted in internal and external meetings while my white colleagues' larger mistakes are glossed over.

Message: Black minds, Black work, and Black contributions will always be found lacking.

- Every time someone who looks like me, who could be me, is brutalized, beaten, and/or killed, I experience a lack of understanding and empathy from colleagues. In addition, the mental strain of worrying about my Black family members and friends adds immense stress and strain to my life.

Message: Black grief, Black wounds, and Black Healing do not matter.

- Early on in my career, I learned to dim and caveat my knowledge because white colleagues were visibly threatened by a young Black woman speaking confidentially and intelligently about projects and ideas. "Growing up" at CARB, I internalized these messages for years. I am still unlearning this behavior.

Message: Black minds, Black ambition, and Black intelligence should be silenced/suppressed. Black contributions do not have value.

- I live in a state of perpetual anxiety because my actions reflect on all Black people. I work twice as hard as my white colleagues only to be considered just as good. My successes are not celebrated and my mistakes reinforce negative stereotypes and implicit biases about Black people. Imagine living life knowing that all your mistakes will be held, not just against you, but your entire race. That is a very heavy weight to carry.

Message: There is no tolerance for Black mistakes or missteps. Black minds, Black work, and Black contributions will always be found lacking.

Black Stories. Black Lives. Black Minds. Black Careers. Black Goals. Black Struggles. Black Achievements. Black Spaces. Black Growth. Black Healing. Black Joy.

It All Matters.

What Comes Next – An Action Plan for Black Lives at CARB

We have put together a list of actions that we believe will help shift the culture at CARB from one of white privilege to an actively anti-racist and more inclusive culture that values and affirms Black lives. This list is not exhaustive but it provides a foundation and a beginning for the conversations and hard work to come. Again, we want to acknowledge non-Black POC here and point out that although this Action Plan focuses on Black employees, all of these items can, and should, be applied to all non-Black POC at CARB.

1. Pay Attention.

Since the murder of George Floyd, we have heard white people recite an exhausting and infuriating refrain of absolute privilege -- “we did not know.” The merciless oppression of Black people occurs day in and day out, through countless micro-aggressions and other more blatant instances of racism and discrimination. White people did not know because they did not have to. They were either insulated from the truths faced by Black bodies in every facet of life; or able to ignore what was happening around them because there was no threat to their mental or physical wellbeing. We cannot change past ignorance, but we have documented our stories here so that people at CARB can no longer say that they did not know, or that racism does not take place at our agency.

2. Create a Culture of Allyship

- Creating a culture of allyship starts with listening to Black people and Black stories.
- Believe Black people.
- CARB employees need to take responsibility for educating themselves and their peers instead of relying on Black employees to figure out what allyship looks like for them. It is not the responsibility of the oppressed to prove their oppression. That said, CARB employees should ask questions when needed and commit to listening to responses with compassion and an open mind; even if it is not what they want to hear or it contradicts their beliefs or what they were taught.
- Be mindful of how Black colleagues are treated in the workplace and speak up when you witness micro-aggressions or more blatant instances of racism.
- Reflect on individual implicit biases and contributions to the culture of white and non-Black POC privilege at CARB. Here are some questions to consider while exploring self-awareness of Black struggles and becoming an ally in the workplace:
 - How do I enable or benefit from racist ideologies and institutions?
 - Am I contributing to racist stereotypes or ideologies that hurt Black people? Do I speak up when I hear others perpetuating these harmful stereotypes?
 - Are Black voices being heard/acknowledged or are white voices trying to speak over or silence them?
 - Are Black ideas being valued or are they being used as stepping stones for the success of others?
 - Are Black employees being encouraged and supported like their white or non-Black POC counterparts or are they being passed over for positions or assignments they are qualified for?

3. Be Actively Anti-Racist

- Institute a zero-tolerance policy for racism and establish an anonymous pathway to report racist behaviors and actions.
- Create a culture of allyship (*Action Item 2*).
- Being actively anti-racist means promoting real conversations about race, revamping diversity and inclusion programs, and better managing Black career development at every level of CARB.
- Being anti-racist is not a destination; it is a way of being that requires self-reflection, awareness of Black issues, vigilance, and strict intolerance of all forms of racism.

4. Increase Black Representation through Hiring and Promoting Black People

- There is a notable lack of Black employees and Black representation in management. More qualified Black people should be hired at every level of CARB, especially upper management (e.g., Branch Chiefs, Division Chiefs, and Executives).
- Qualified Black employees have consistently been passed over for interviews, upward mobility assignments, and promotions.
- Hiring Practices
 - Remove names from all resumes evaluated by hiring managers. Candidates invited for interviews should be chosen based on merit and background only. This removes implicit bias in screening out qualified resumes with Black sounding names during the initial hiring process.
 - If automated processes are used to select candidates, ensure that these processes are truly impartial and not influenced by human implicit biases.
 - Create diverse interview panels.
 - CARB often questions how candidates will fit into the existing culture rather than questioning how CARB can or should adjust to be more inclusive or forward-thinking. It is important to hire employees that will mesh well with an organization and work well with others, but it is also essential that CARB is able to grow and change.
 - Establish clear guidelines for experience requirements on job and exam postings that cannot be stretched to fit the qualifications of desired employees. This has occurred in the past to help white and non-Black POC employees/candidates apply for a position or get on an eligibility list, while Black employees/candidates have not been (and are not) afforded the same opportunities.
- Recruitment
 - Offer internships and/or scholarships to Black people.
 - Attend career fairs displaying diverse talent to create access for qualified candidates in underserved and/or under-represented areas.
 - Create oversight to ensure accountability in recruiting diverse job candidates.

5. Support Black Employees and Encourage Black Excellence

- Historically, Black excellence is something that has been feared by white people. This has led to the perpetuation of false stereotypes, discrimination, and implicit biases against Black people to maintain white dominance.
- Encourage Black excellence by ensuring Black employees have equitable access to professional development, stretch assignments, and reward and recognition systems compared to their white counterparts.
- Cultivate a group of Black mentors to provide support to Black employees in their career goals.
- Provide opportunities for Black employees to give honest feedback on their experiences working at CARB to help evaluate progress toward diversity and inclusion.

6. Appoint Black People to the Executive Office and CARB Board

This is a continuation of *Action Item 4* above which talks about increasing Black representation across the entire agency. However, this deserves a standalone action item.

Executive Office

There is currently an opening for the Assistant Executive Officer position. This position was previously filled by a Black woman. This vacancy should be filled either by another qualified Black person or a non-Black person of color. Additionally, the title of this position should be changed from “Assistant Executive Officer” to “Deputy Executive Officer” to reflect the importance of the role and to align with CalEPA and the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Both CalEPA and DTSC have similar positions which they have elevated to deputy-level positions.

CARB Board

According to the [Initial Staggered Terms for Voting Members of the California Air Resources Board](#), terms for 11 members will expire over the next four years. Five member terms will expire in December 31, 2020 and an additional six will expire in December 31, 2022. Out of those 11 seats, at least one of the newly elected Board members should be a Black person and at least two additional seats should be filled by non-Black POC.

We recognize that CARB Board members are selected by the Governor’s Office and the California Legislature, not CARB itself. However, CARB can advocate for and encourage qualified Black candidates and other non-Black POC to apply for these openings.

7. Pay Black Employees Equal to Our White Counterparts

- Pay equity (equal access to higher earning potential) and pay equality (all employees have the opportunity to earn the same pay for the same, or very similar, jobs) are critical parts of racial equity in the workplace. Shortcomings in either area hurt Black employees and contribute to generational wealth gaps because Black employees are not afforded the same access and/or opportunities to succeed as their white counterparts (see Hiring and Recruitment examples in *Action Item 4*).
- Immediately close any pay gaps between Black and white employees within the same classification, who have equal education, experience, and/or degrees.
 - Inconsistencies in pay placement within classifications have led to Black employees having to fight for equal pay upon learning that white employees have been given higher pay for the same experience.
 - An analysis needs to be done to evaluate why this occurs and determine how often Black employees are affected.
 - CARB should create a transparent process to ensure that everyone hired with same degrees and same experience is being paid the same amount.

8. Overhaul “Diversity and Inclusion” Training

- Be mindful of trainings being just for show or to check a box – the end goal for whatever is developed is to create real and lasting change; it should be designed accordingly (applies to *Action Item 9* as well).
- Training should be mandatory for all employees at least once a year.
- Training should actively highlight racial equity issues instead of tiptoeing around or glossing over them.
 - It is human nature to move from places of discomfort to those of comfort. People will not be motivated to learn or change without being made uncomfortable. Once people are thoroughly uncomfortable, that is when and where the work begins.
- Suggested additions to existing trainings:
 - Spoken word or videos with voices of Black, Indigenous, or other people of color (BIPOC).
 - Define what racism is – notably, explain that being a “good person” and being complicit with or benefitting from racism ARE NOT mutually exclusive.
 - Explain racial justice and equity terms (e.g., BIPOC, privilege, tokenism, systemic and institutional racism, micro-aggressions)

9. Create a Racial Equity Committee or Task Force at CARB

- CARB has already started work on this action item (e.g., Diversity and Racial Equity Task Force; GARE). Provided below are recommendations to help ensure that these efforts lead to genuine change:

- Start by taking an honest look at the institutional and structural racism at CARB.
- The Committee/Task Force should be driven by/involve BIPOC but should also include white allies to open doors and speak in spaces that may otherwise remain closed for us.
- Discourage tokenism. Do not overwhelm us with committees because you need representation from BIPOC. Be intentional.
- Create oversight within the Committee/Task Force to ensure it stays true to the original intent/mission, even after CARB leadership who are supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement have moved on from CARB.
- Ensure that there is no backlash for participating in the Committee/Task Force or for reporting abuse.

10. Affirm Black Life

- Black lives can be affirmed through all the items provided in this action plan.
- Speak out in support of Black lives.
- Invest in the mental and physical safety and wellbeing of Black colleagues and employees -- listen to Black employees when they tell you what they need.
- Support flexible schedules that allow time off for Black healing.
- White employees may complain that some of these action items, and others like them, give unfair advantages to Black employees. Black people have spent generations watching white people have unfair advantages. Realize that these actions -- and the entire movement behind racial justice -- is not only about fairness and equality, it is about equity. Equality in business practices will not be effective until true equity is achieved, leveling the playing field for Black employees and affording them the same foundation and opportunities for greatness that are available to white employees.

The Work Begins – Next Steps

Changing the culture of systemic racism and implicit bias at CARB will only succeed after acknowledging the challenges faced by Black employees, and taking concrete actions to address those challenges. We recognize that some of the action items outlined above cannot be changed unilaterally by CARB and will require collaboration with other agencies (e.g., CalHR for hiring practices, the Governor's Office for appointing Board members, and Department of Finance for pay equity issues). However, we encourage CARB leadership to pursue all avenues necessary to identify and remedy racial equity disparities. Be intentional, consistent, and persistent. It will take time to embrace a new culture of racial equity at CARB but this approach will be imperative to creating lasting change for Black people at CARB.

CARB has already taken steps toward addressing racial equity issues inside and outside the agency (e.g., Diversity and Racial Equity Task Force, GARE, equity groups,

EAP Program, EJ Storytelling) and multiple conversations have already occurred within CARB management. Creating space for these conversations, programs, and groups is important, but it only begins to lay the foundation for the hard work ahead of us. Much work remains to be done to create sustainable equitable structures for Black people and non-Black POC within CARB, and in the communities we serve.

As we said at the beginning of this letter, our intent in sharing this Letter and Action Plan is not to shame or belittle CARB, or to assign blame. We enjoy the work we do at CARB, and want to do all we can to improve CARB for the future, and our future careers with the agency. We hope our words have helped to shine a light on areas where CARB can improve so that our agency can move forward as part of the solution.

Sincerely,

Concerned Black Employees at CARB