

*Sent via E-mail and FEDEX*

March 11, 2005

**Division of  
Environmental Health**

Department of  
Preventive Medicine

Alan C. Lloyd, PhD., Secretary  
California Environmental Protection Agency  
1001 "I" Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary  
California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency  
980 9th Street, Suite 2450  
Sacramento, CA 95814-2719

Re: Report from "Growing Pains: A Town Meeting on Health and Community Impacts of Goods Movement and the Ports"

Dear Secretaries Lloyd and McPeak:

On February 25-26, 2005, the Southern California Environmental Health Sciences Center, which is directed by Dr. John Peters, convened a Town Meeting in Long Beach, California to discuss the implications of increased international trade and goods movement in Southern California. The meeting was called: "Growing Pains: Health and Community Impacts of Goods Movement and the Ports." The Town Meeting agenda, its sponsors, academic partners (including USC, UCLA, and Occidental College), funders and community partners can be found online at <http://hydra.usc.edu/scehsc/TownMeeting2005>.

This letter is written on behalf of the attendees of the meeting, who were challenged by Cabinet Secretary Terry Tamminen to become more engaged in the process underway in your agencies to develop an Action Plan on goods movements and the ports. (See additional details below).

More than 400 representatives from community-based organizations, environmental groups, academic research centers, industry groups (e.g., the Ports and railroads), elected officials and their staff members, representatives of local governments, and other members of the Southern California community attended the meeting. (Please see attached list of attendees and their organizations.) The Town Meeting served to share information about the environmental health challenges created by ongoing expansion of the Ports and related expansion of the goods movement infrastructure in Southern California, and it also brought together many of the impacted parties in a forum that allowed them to strategize on solutions for ensuring a healthy future for Southern Californians.

At the meeting, USC and UCLA scientists from the Southern California Environment Health Sciences Center presented considerable evidence from their scientific studies showing that disease and adverse health outcomes are occurring among Southern California residents as a result of current air pollution levels in the region. The adverse health outcomes described included respiratory and cardiovascular effects, reproductive effects and birth defects, cancer and more. They raised particular concerns about mobile source emissions and described the need to reduce levels of air pollutants resulting from the Ports and goods movement activity in order to prevent adverse health effects. Economist Jon Haveman from the Public Policy Institute of California estimated that the externalized cost of these health problems (in terms of medical care alone) is 2.5 billion dollars a year. Community members such as Evangelina Ramirez, a founding member of the Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, testified about the human impact of air pollution on children with asthma and other respiratory illnesses.

On the first day of the meeting, following the community panel, California Cabinet Secretary Terry Tamminen pledged Governor Schwarzenegger's commitment to creating a sustainable and viable future for California and to addressing the environmental, health and community issues associated with the Ports and goods movement. In his address to the gathering, Secretary Tamminen challenged the audience to become engaged in the "Action Plan for Goods Movement" process underway in Sacramento.

In response to this challenge, Town Meeting participants made comments during Open Microphone sessions and also developed a series of recommendations in the Saturday afternoon workshops. Workshop reports were presented in the final plenary session chaired by Professor Robert Gottlieb of Occidental College's Urban and Environmental Policy Institute. Key recommendations follow and are described in greater detail in the attached report.

1. First and foremost, in the Open Mike sessions and in the workshops, community participants recommended that the community and its health, environment, and quality of life must be made a priority in deciding the Ports and goods movement agenda.
2. Second, many of the participants and also the workshop reports make a strong request for the State to provide open lines of communication, to provide opportunities for public participation, and to maximize community input into the creation of an "Action Plan" on the Ports and goods movement.
3. Third, the workshop reports suggested that the process of creating such an "Action Plan" must be slowed down to provide true community input, because many Town Meeting participants believe that there has been inadequate opportunity for public participation in creating a plan that is online to be finalized within a few weeks, if not days.
4. Fourth, participants requested that an analysis must be performed to calculate the health and environmental costs borne by local residents compared to the business and nationwide consumer benefits of increased international trade and goods movement in Southern California.
5. Finally, participants recommended that a number of steps must be taken, ranging from technological advancements to policy changes, to ensure sustainable Ports growth that protect health and uphold the quality of life in Southern California.

Attached are specific recommendations during the Town Meeting and by "reporters" from the Town Meeting workshops in the gathering's final session. In response to Cabinet Secretary Tamminen's charge, we are submitting these recommendations on behalf of the Town Meeting attendees to be considered as part of your goods movement "Action Plan" process, and we strongly urge you to provide for community and scientific participation by lengthening the process for input before finalizing any Plan.

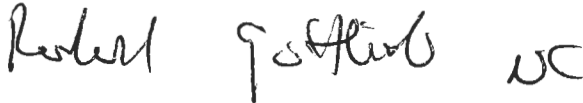
We have also sent a letter to Cabinet Secretary Terry Tamminen, enclosing a copy of this letter and the attachments.

Please contact us with any questions and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Andrea M. Hricko, MPH  
Director of Community Outreach and Education  
Southern California Environmental Health Sciences Center &  
Associate Professor of Preventive Medicine  
Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California



Robert Gottlieb  
Henry R. Luce Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and  
Director, Urban and Environmental Policy Institute  
Occidental College

cc: Catherine Witherspoon

Attachments: Town Meeting Agenda  
List of Town Meeting attendees and their organizations or cities  
Draft Report of Recommendations from Town Meeting attendees