

MODEL RESOLUTION TO CREATE STATE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO ENSURE FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS REACH DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

A JOINT RESOLUTION

TO CREATE THE "ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE" TO STUDY AND RECOMMEND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES; TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE COMMITTEE SUBMIT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WHITE HOUSE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY; AND TO PROVIDE FOR ITS DISSOLUTION.

WHEREAS, President Biden signed into law the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act on November 15, 2021; and

WHEREAS, also on November 15, 2021, President Biden signed an Executive Order providing that the Justice40 Initiative will be a Government-wide effort toward a goal that 40 percent of overall benefits from Federal investments in climate change and clean energy flow to disadvantaged communities; and

WHEREAS, there are certain disadvantaged communities that need significant improvements in the areas of public transit, broadband access, water systems and climate resilience throughout the State, and active participation in the Justice40 Initiative could help provide, among other things, better and less polluting public transit, reliable and affordable high-speed Internet access, and clean drinking water to these communities; and

WHEREAS, it is important to seize the opportunities provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Justice40 Initiative and form a committee to identify and help organize disadvantaged communities to ensure that these communities derive the full benefit of these credits, grants, and loans; and

WHEREAS, the State of [] cannot afford to fall behind in the push for a cleaner and more just future. NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it enacted by the House of Representatives/Assembly and Senate of the State of []:

SECTION 1. (A) There is created the thirteen-member Environmental Justice Oversight Committee ("Committee") to study and make recommendations for

infrastructure projects in disadvantaged communities in [insert relevant state]. As used in this Resolution, “disadvantaged communities” means any census tract, as delineated in the most recent decennial census, that is ranked in the bottom 25 percent of census tracts in the State for median annual household income. Additionally, as used in this Resolution, “infrastructure” means all of the sectors included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, including transportation, water, energy, broadband, and the resilience and rehabilitation of the nation’s natural resources. The Committee shall:

- (1) identify disadvantaged communities throughout [insert relevant state] that have experienced the impact of environmental injustice;
- (2) identify infrastructure deficiencies in these communities;
- (3) assist members of the community in developing plans to apply for assistance to secure funding for infrastructure projects;
- (4) recommend infrastructure projects in its report based upon its study; and
- (5) undertake other actions necessary to carry out the purpose of the Committee.

(B) The Committee must be comprised of:

- (1) two members of the State House of Representatives/Assembly;
- (2) two members of the State Senate;
- (3) the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection/Quality or his/her designee;
- (4) the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation or his/her designee;
- (5) the Commissioner of [insert another relevant commission] or his/her designee;
- (6) a member of the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council;
- (7) the Secretary of Transportation or his designee; and
- (8) two members appointed by the Governor.

(C) The Committee shall work with the State's [Department of Environmental Protection/Quality], as well as any other appropriate entities while undertaking its assigned duties.

(D) The State House of Representatives/Assembly and Senate shall provide appropriate staffing for the Committee.

(E) The Committee shall provide a report to the State House/Assembly [] Committee, the State Senate [] Committee, the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council by December 31, 2023, at which time the Committee shall dissolve.

SECTION 2. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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