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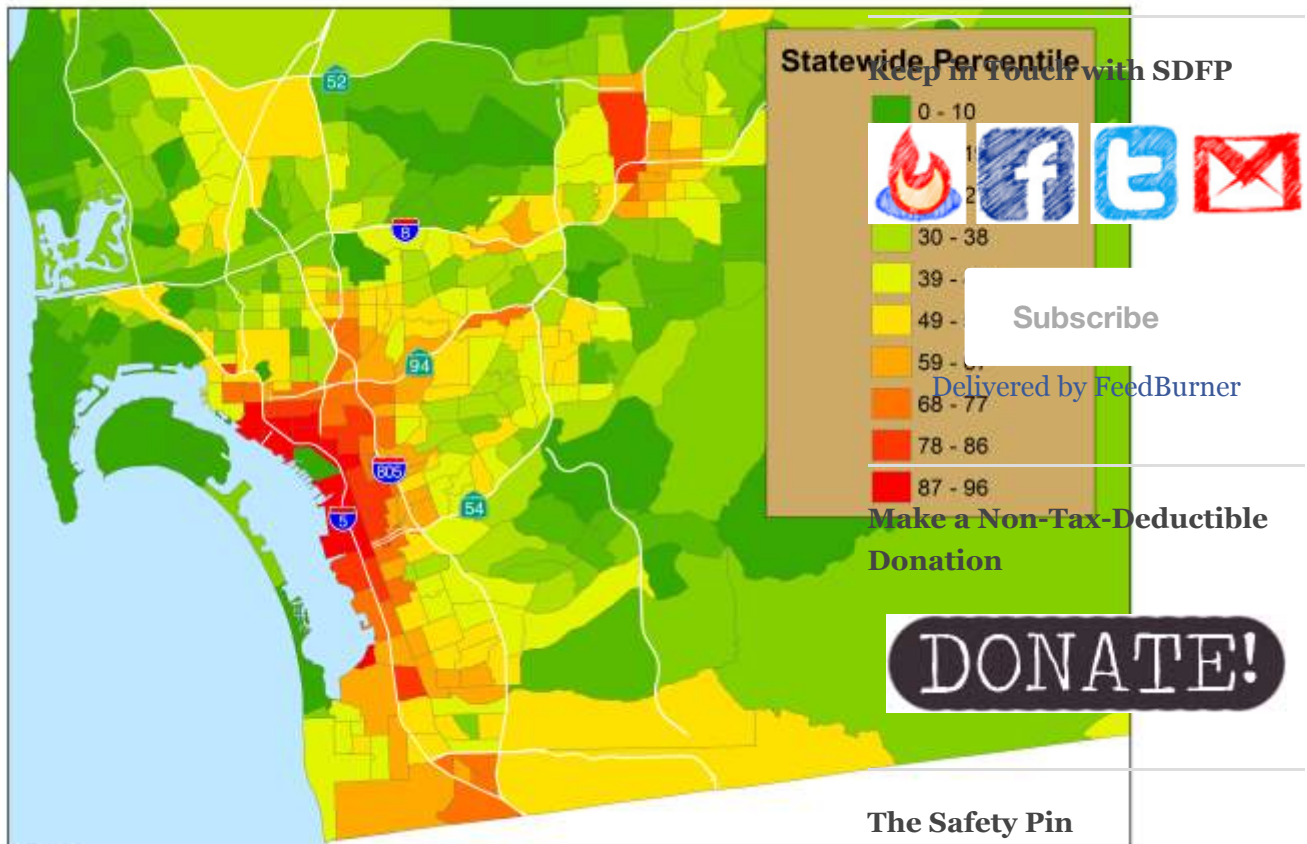
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The Environmental Justice Argument Against Measure A

OCTOBER 24, 2016 BY JIM MILLER — 1 COMMENT



By Jim Miller

The campaign for Measure A was busy this week sending one mailer to Democrats greenwashing their flawed initiative by citing an Astroturf “environmental coalition” that popped up just in time for the election, while in another mailer to Republicans they signaled that conservatives should vote for A because environmentalists and labor oppose it. Welcome to dishonest, doublethink business as usual politics in San Diego brought to you by moneyed interests.

Of course the reality is, as anyone who has paid attention to this column knows, that progressive labor and nearly all of the serious organizations that care about climate and environmental justice oppose Measure A. A few weeks ago, I published a column I co-wrote with Nicole Capretz of the Climate Action Campaign and Nick Segura of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers outlining Measure A’s [fatal flaws from a progressive perspective](#). This was followed in subsequent weeks by columns on Measures A’s deep inadequacies [with regard to sustainability and climate](#) by Jana Clark of the Cleveland National Forest Foundation and Save Our Forest and Ranchlands, and David Harris of SD 350 and Ruben Arizmendi of the [Sierra Club San Diego](#).

This week, I am pleased to share this space with Diane Takvorian, the Executive Director of the Environmental Health Coalition who will make the environmental justice case against Measure A.

Measure A is More Bad News for Low-Income Communities

By Diane Takvorian, Executive Director, Environmental Health Coalition

Voters Should Reject Measure A- This year San Diego voters have an opportunity to take a critical first step towards bringing San Diego into the 21st century. Right now, San Diego has an outdated and obsolete transportation system. Measure A will perpetuate that system for another 40 years!

Two generations of San Diegans will be stuck with this backward system instead of clean and just transportation if voters don’t give a



Call 2 Action

Unite & Resist Trump : J20 March on Inauguration Day

WHEN: Friday, Jan. 20th, 2017
10:30 AM - 9:00 PM

WHERE: San Diego City
College
1313 Park Blvd, San Diego, CA
92101

On Inauguration Day, join the people of San Diego to unite against bigotry, misogyny, Islamophobia, ableism, racism and xenophobia!

Daytime:

10:30am Rally at San Diego City College

11:00am Speakers at SD City College

11:30am March to the Federal Building

12:00pm Speakers at Federal Building

Evening:

5:00pm Join Unión del Barrio to protest at Chicano Park

6:00pm March in Barrio Logan

[Facebook event page: here](#)

Is History Repeating Itself? (Katy Perry, producer)

resounding NO to Measure A on November 8.

While all San Diegans suffer from this outdated and ineffective system, some people are much more affected than others. Measure A doesn't do much good for anyone in the region but it is particularly bad for those communities that are already inundated by pollution and surrounded by freeways.

Measure A is Bad for South Bay Communities

More Pollution/More Disease- National City, for instance, is one of San Diego's poorest cities, with a per capita income under \$17,000 per year. Over 90% of the residents are persons of color. The community is highly polluted by heavy freeway traffic on I-5, I-15, SR 54, I-805 and its residents suffer multiple health problems caused by vehicle and truck emissions. As a result, CalEnviroScreen, the state's tracking tool for pollution impacts, includes the west side of National City, Old Town, among the 10% most polluted communities in the state.

San Diego County remains among the top major urban counties in California for poor air quality. The countywide rate of asthma hospitalizations increased from 9 to 10.3 per 10,000 residents aged 0-17. The rate for National City children is twice as high as the county average.

SANDAG's freeway expansion obsession doesn't work!-

Instead of using this data to inform transportation planning, SANDAG is ignoring it. Our region's goal should be to avoid adding more pollution to San Diego overall but particularly in the most impacted communities. But no, despite the already high level of traffic pollution, SANDAG will use Measure A funds to expand the I-5 corridor through National City with four new lanes, one general purpose and one express lane in each direction. The agency's forecast is that this will result in an average of 238,000 vehicle trips per day. While there are different data for current traffic levels, that is an increase of between 17 and 30%.

Moreover, freeway expansion doesn't relieve congestion or reduce driving – two oft-cited goals of the regional transportation plan. In October 2015 UC Davis' National Center for Sustainable Transportation reported that "Increased roadway capacity induces additional vehicle miles traveled in the short-run and even more in

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the long-run.” More roads mean more traffic in both the short- and long-term. Adding 10 percent more road capacity leads to up to 10% more vehicle miles over many years.

Local Infrastructure—Residents living in a low-income neighborhood in the City of San Diego are ten times more likely to be hit by a car than those that live in most other neighborhoods. Southern San Diego residents not only suffer from high levels of air pollution and correspondingly high rates of respiratory disease, these communities, including Barrio Logan, City Heights, National City, Chula Vista and Imperial Beach, live with crumbling infrastructure like broken or nonexistent sidewalks, a lack of crosswalks to safely navigate traffic and a lack of bike lanes common in many traditionally funded communities.

Well-maintained local infrastructure is a key component to an effective transportation system and should be included in transportation funding.

Finally—To be clear, transit and infrastructure funding are included in Measure A. That funding is badly needed and could benefit the most impacted communities and the entire region. But the price is way too high. Miles of freeways will be built in the worst locations before affordable and accessible transit becomes a reality. Measure A forces lower income San Diegans to subsidize use of our roads with higher taxes and damaged lungs. Measure A will increase disease, air and water pollution and traffic congestion.

Don't support a tax measure that builds on a flawed plan that will not bring San Diego into the 21st century and will make climate change worse. We have come to the decisive moment when scientific reality must trump politics. We are out of time for half measures.

Our communities deserve better, our children deserve better – smart transportation investments that will ease traffic, address climate change, and reduce disease should come first.

Vote No on Measure A.

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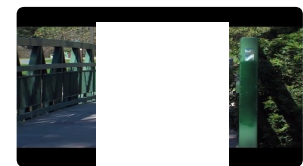
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