

September 23, 2016

**Greenaction Helps Win Legislative Victory for Environmental Justice and Civil Rights!**

**California Assembly Bill 1787 Signed into Law, Guaranteeing Equal Time to Testify at Local Legislative Body Meetings for Non-English Speakers**

Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice is proud of our work mobilizing support for California Assembly Bill 1787 that was just signed into law by Governor Brown. We appreciate Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez for sponsoring the legislation, and thank all the community and environmental justice organizations that joined in support of the campaign to get the bill passed and signed into law.

AB 1787 requires a local legislative body such as a county or city to provide additional time to members of the public who need a translator to address the legislative body. This is the exact requirement that already exists at the state level. AB 1787 addresses this issue by requiring the legislative body that limits time for public comment to provide at least twice the allotted time to members of the public who need a translator to address legislative bodies.

This bill was inspired by the outrage and challenges to the racially discriminatory permit process used by Kings County in the Kettleman City toxic dump permit process where Spanish speakers were given only half the time to testify as English speakers. At the infamous Kings County hearing, US citizen Ramon Mares who is a monolingual Spanish speaker (and co-founder of both El Pueblo of Kettleman City and Greenaction) was dragged out of the hearing by 8 police officers for the “crime” of demanding equal time to testify as English speakers.

We will continue fighting to end all racial discrimination in federal, state and local environmental decision making (and everywhere). We will now escalate our efforts to stop government agencies from using English-only environmental review documents in communities where there is a large percentage of

Kettleman City's struggle continues to spark real changes for justice! Adelante!