



Recommendations for Legislation based on Historic Congressional Summit on Environmental Justice, Health Equity & Civil Rights

Front Line Communities Working with Chairman Raúl Grijalva and (D-AZ), Rep. A. Donald McEachin (D-VA), other lawmakers & experts from across the US
English / Spanish www.cityprojectca.org/blog/archives/46133

The historic Congressional Environmental Justice Summit, in the first convening of its kind by the House Natural Resources Committee, provided a venue for community activists and practitioners to communicate their needs directly to members of Congress who are committed to alleviating longstanding inequities in economically oppressed and politically marginalized communities. The conversation will produce a set of principles to inform legislation to be introduced later Congress.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., sought a “middle ground between riots on the one hand and timid supplications for justice on the other.” Combined community organizing and legal strategies provide that middle ground for social change. The Justice, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI) Framework provides the framework based on civil rights, environmental, and health law.

Justice, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI) Framework

The framework for Justice, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion outlines five major steps: (1) Describe what you plan to do. (2) Include people who are of color, low income or politically marginalized in making decisions every step of the way. (3) Identify numerical disparities and inequities in benefits and burdens through social science evidence, anecdotal evidence, history, demographics, GIS mapping and analysis, standards and data, and the values at stake. (4) Consider alternatives to what is planned. (5) Implement a plan that distributes benefits and equitably and without discrimination. Discrimination includes intent, unjustified impacts, implicit bias, and systemic or structural discrimination, or “business as usual.” We are all entitled to a healthy environment, where live, learn, work, play, pray, and age.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report, *Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity*, pp. 354-55 (2017) - social determinants of health. www.nationalacademies.org/promotehealthequity.

PRRAC handbook, *Strategies for Health Justice: Lessons from the Field* (2018), pp. 45-57. prrac.org/pdf/health_justice_rpt.pdf (Poverty Race Research Action Council).

Mark Magaña, Xavier Morales, and Robert García, *A Framework for Civil Rights, Environmental Justice, Health Equity, and Public Engagement* (2019). www.greenlatinos.org/environmental_justice.

Samuel García, *Take Action Comics: The City Project*. takeactioncomics.com.



LEAGUE of UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS



GREENLATINOS

PRRAC
Poverty & Race
Research Action
Council



“The heart of the Green New Deal is about social justice.” Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

We agree. No justice, no Green New Deal. The New Deal, Civilian Conservation Corps, and 2007 Green New Deal discriminated against people of color and low income people.

AOC, The City Project, and Green Latinos, *Green Justice New Deal*. www.cityprojectca.org/blog/archives/45858.

Climate Is a Human and Conservation Crisis

Cornell Prof. Gerald Torres & Robert García, *Pricing Justice*. www.cityprojectca.org/blog/archives/43641.

Sam García, *Latinos & Climate Change: Opinions, Impacts & Responses* (2016). www.cityprojectca.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Sam-Garcia-Latinos-Climate-Change-Policy-Report-GL-TCP-2016.pdf.

Pope Francis Encyclical (2015). www.cityprojectca.org/blog/archives/38889.

The California Coastal Commission's Environmental Justice Policy and Report are best practice examples applying the framework

Environmental justice emerged out of the civil rights movement to describe the application of civil rights and social justice to environmental contexts under state and federal laws, including Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. "Equity" in this context refers to the fairness of outcomes for all groups where no one factor, such as race, can be used to predict outcomes. Terms like diversity, inclusion, urban, at risk, or policy without more are not enough. Advocates must stand up for people's rights who pay the price with their health, children, and lives.

California Coastal Commission, *Environmental Justice Policy* 2019, pp. 2-4, 18-19.
documents.coastal.ca.gov/assets/env-justice/CCC_EJ_Policy_FINAL.pdf and www.coastal.ca.gov/env-justice/.

Diversifying Mainstream Environmentalists Is Not Enough.

Unrestricted, long-term support for front line groups to combining organizing and legal strategies for equal justice, health equity, and environmental justice is needed for transformational change.

Dr. Robert Bullard and Robert García, *NRPA Parks & Recreation Magazine*,
www.cityprojectca.org/blog/archives/38559.

Equal Access to Public Parks, Waters, and Monuments Is a Compelling State Interest

Access to parks and recreation has been a core equal justice and human dignity concern since the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. This led to *Brown v Board of Education* and *Watson v City of Memphis* before the US Supreme Court, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in Congress, implementation by the President and federal agencies, and beyond.

Veda Banerjee, *Testing the Water: Sutro Baths Case Set Precedent for Civil Rights Laws*.
www.parksconservancy.org/park-e-ventures-article/testing-water-sutro-baths-case-set-precedent-civil-rights-laws.

The Border Wall Is a Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Issue

House Natural Resources Committee, *forum on the disastrous impacts the border wall would have on communities, the environment and wildlife* (2019). www.cityprojectca.org/blog/archives/45868.

The Values at Stake

The values include fun, health, human development, and bringing people together; access to parks, recreation, waters, monuments, and transit to parks; access to education, including STEAM (STEM, art, culture, and history); economic vitality, including quality jobs, deeply affordable housing, and displacement; and conservation and climate justice. Equal justice and democratic governance underlie these values under the framework and authorities above.

Robert García is Founding Director-Counsel, The City Project / Proyecto del Pueblo



20190702

The City Project / Proyecto del Pueblo
Equal Justice, Democracy, and Livability for All
Visit our website and blog at www.cityprojectca.org
907 Westwood Blvd., Suite 308, Los Angeles, CA 90024 • 213-260-1035 • hello@cityprojectca.org
A project of Community Partners - Donations are tax deductible