



## **FAQs on Senate Bill 49 CA Environmental, Public Health, and Workers Defense Act of 2017**

### **1. What does SB 49, The CA Environmental, Public Health, and Workers Defense Act, do?**

SB 49 (De Leon/Stern) ensures that common sense safeguards Californians support overwhelmingly are not weakened by the new regime in Washington DC. The bill makes core public health, worker safety, and environmental standards enforceable under state law, even if they are rolled back federally. This helps protect California's air quality, water, communities, and economy from federal changes, giving us the final say over our worker and environmental rules.

### **2. Why is SB 49 Needed?**

Californians know that a thriving economy and healthy environment go hand in hand, and we should have final say in the stringency of our public health and environmental protections. Despite federal government changes, now or in the future, California's investments in our clean air and clean water deserve the same certainty provided to other investments. Already in 2017, key protections that prevented the dumping of coal ash into rivers and the uncontrolled release of methane gas have been revoked at the federal level.

Progress on clean energy and climate action is under threat, despite international competition to attract clean-tech companies. SB 49 is needed to ensure that California does not go backwards on public and environmental health, providing more stability to businesses and investors that depend on clean air or clean water. Consider that outdoor recreation is an \$85 billion dollar industry, and California tourism is worth \$126 billion. These major industries depend on such protections, as do 120,000 fishery and 500,000 clean energy workers.

### **3. Shouldn't we wait to see what actions are taken nationally before crafting our state response?**

No. It is very difficult to predict and track efforts to defund and dismantle environmental protections in the current political climate. This bill ensures that California is prepared to stay the course on clean air, water, and public health. By putting this law into place now, we are providing certainty for California businesses and residents about the future of fundamental environmental and health protections in the state.

### **4. Has a law like this ever been proposed or enacted before?**

Yes. For example, when the Bush Administration proposed rolling back federal smoke stack pollution rules, the California Legislature passed the Protect California Air Act of 2003. That law enshrined the existing federal smoke stack rules into California Law to ensure the anti-smog protections stayed in place.

### **5. Will this bill create new requirements for businesses?**

No. This bill simply keeps in place the baseline standards that businesses have already met, many of which have been in place for decades. The vast majority of businesses are already doing their part to protect our health and quality of life, and SB 49 will make sure all California businesses are held to the same high standards. SB 49 does not add new rules, but it does prevent us from going backwards.

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