



SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PRESS RELEASE

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South Coast AQMD Governing Board Elects Ben Benoit as Chair, and Vanessa Delgado as Vice-Chair

DIAMOND BAR – Today, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) Governing Board voted unanimously to elect Ben J. Benoit, Mayor Pro Tem for the City of Wildomar, as chairman, and Vanessa Delgado, former California state senator and former mayor of the City of Montebello, as vice-chair. Their new roles will begin on May 1, 2021.

The election was held to fill the unexpired term for the chair position being vacated by Dr. William A. Burke, who will be retiring from the Board in May. The chair and vice-chair terms will expire on January 14, 2022.

“I want to thank my fellow board members for this great honor and extend my sincere gratitude to Chairman Burke for his leadership during his 27 years of dedicated service,” said Ben Benoit, South Coast AQMD’s Governing Board chair-elect. “I am proud of our accomplishments during my nine years with the Board and look forward to continue working toward our air quality goals.”

Benoit was appointed to South Coast AQMD’s Governing Board in 2012 to fill the unexpired term left by the retirement of then City of Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge. Benoit has served as vice-chair of the Governing Board since January 2016. He chairs the agency’s Stationary Source Committee, serves as vice-chair of the agency’s Administrative Committee and is a member of the Refinery and Personnel committees.

Additionally, Benoit is also a past chair for both the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) and the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) where he still serves. He also serves the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) and represents air districts as a regional council member on the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

Former state senator, Mayor of Montebello and city councilmember, Vanessa Delgado, joined the Governing Board in May 2019 as the Senate Rules Committee representative. She serves on the South

Coast AQMD Climate Change, Investment Oversight, Legislative, Marine Port and Stationary Source committees. Delgado is currently the founder and President of Azure Development, a real estate development firm.

“It is a tremendous honor to be elected to this leadership role by the Governing Board,” said Vanessa Delgado. “I look forward to building on my commitment to strengthen our fight for clean air and improve public health for all residents, especially children, and those in underserved communities.”

Chairman Burke announced his retirement in March after 27 years of service on the Board, including an unprecedented 23 years as chair. He is the longest-tenured member and the longest-serving chairman of the South Coast AQMD Governing Board. In February this year, the Governing Board agreed to name the auditorium in the agency’s Diamond Bar headquarters after him for his lifelong dedication and service as an environmental justice trailblazer.

South Coast AQMD is the air pollution control agency for major portions of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside counties, including the Coachella Valley. For news, air quality alerts, event updates and more, please visit us at www.aqmd.gov, download our award-winning app, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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