



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 12 2019

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1252 without my signature.

This bill expands the California Environmental Protection Agency's (CalEPA) authority to distribute advanced payments for grants awarded under the Environmental Justice Small Grant Program.

Currently environmental justice grant funds are awarded as a reimbursement for approved projects, but organizations may receive an advanced payment of up to \$10,000 in order to begin a project.

I support finding new tools to help community-based non-profit organizations and tribal governments overcome obstacles to accessing environmental justice grants. However, state agencies have to ensure state monies are appropriately spent by verifying the expense prior to disbursing the funds. The resources required to attempt to track down, verify or recover misspent grant dollars after they have been paid would divert staff time and resources away from administering the program and assisting other grant applicants.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom