

Surprise: Jerry Brown grants lawmakers influence on air board

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Gov. Jerry Brown lashed out so forcefully at efforts to dilute his administration's authority to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that the prospect of him giving the Legislature any ground appeared dim.

But on Thursday, Brown extended an overture of peace. The fourth-term Democrat signed legislation granting the Senate Rules Committee and speaker of the Assembly one appointment each to the controversial California Air Resources Board.

In a release, Brown's office said the legislation, by Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, D-San Diego, "will help ensure one of the state's top environmental regulatory bodies – the California Air Resources Board – is more representative of the state's diversity and those most impacted by pollution."

The state air board assumed a central role in this summer's debate over a failed proposal to reduce petroleum use in motor vehicles by 50 percent by 2030. In a barrage of advertising, oil companies depicted the ARB as overly zealous, and even lawmakers supportive of the measure called for additional oversight of the board.

But Brown repeatedly defended the board – and his executive authority.

Just one day before signing the appointment-granting bill, Brown said at a signing ceremony for other climate change legislation, "I love the Legislature, but I don't want to entrust you with too much power, at least on a daily basis."

In addition to the appointments bill, Assembly Bill 1288, Brown signed legislation creating a program to provide financial incentives for solar installations at multifamily affordable housing projects.

Proponents of the legislation, Assembly Bill 693, said it will provide \$1 billion over 10 years in revenue from California's cap-and-trade program to make solar installations more widely available to poor people.

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