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### **Community Groups Welcome AG's Offer to Mediate Chevron Expansion Dispute**

Richmond, CA – Community groups welcomed California Attorney General Jerry Brown's offer, to mediate negotiations with Chevron and the City of Richmond over a court-ordered halt to the company's refinery expansion. The groups hope to find a solution that will address the public health impacts of Chevron's project and put union members back to work on a project that is legally bound to protect public health.

"We are ready, willing, and able to join Jerry Brown in settlement talks," said Mimi Ho of the Asian Pacific Environmental Network. "For the sake of the community and workers, we hope Chevron says yes to this offer."

"Chevron has already caused a public health crisis in Richmond, and with this expansion to dirtier oils, it's about to get worse," Ho said. "Chevron is trying to drive a wedge between the critical community interests of jobs and health – the future of Richmond depends on both."

At a Richmond City Council meeting Tuesday, Brown offered to join negotiations and help hash out a settlement.

The proposed expansion could allow processing of heavier, dirtier crude oil that could increase pollution in a community where children are already hospitalized for asthma at almost twice the rate of children in the rest of the county. The only way to protect the health of the community is to have a new Environmental Impact Report that fully acknowledges the plan to refine dirtier crude, or a negotiated agreement that reduces pollution and guarantees the community will not be polluted by dirtier oil refining.

For two years, a coalition of community groups have demanded an enforceable commitment from Chevron that its project will not worsen the refinery's impact on the health of the community. The coalition includes Communities for a Better Environment, Asian Pacific Environmental Network, and the West County Toxics Coalition. They are represented by Earthjustice.

After Chevron publicly refused to agree to a cap on heavier crude oil to be refined at the site, community groups took their case to court to protect the health of refinery neighbors.