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**AB-649 Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery: Office of Environmental Justice and Tribal Relations. (2021-2022)**

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**Assembly Bill No. 649**

**CHAPTER 492**

An act to add Section 40403 to the Public Resources Code, relating to solid waste.

[ Approved by Governor September 23, 2022. Filed with Secretary of State September 23, 2022. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 649, Bennett. Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery: Office of Environmental Justice and Tribal Relations.

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 establishes in the California Environmental Protection Agency the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery with specified powers and duties relating to waste management.

This bill would establish the Office of Environmental Justice and Tribal Relations within the department. The bill would prescribe the duties of the office, including, among others, ensuring that the department's programs effectively address the needs of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, California Native American tribes, and farmworkers.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 40403 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:

**40403.** (a) The Office of Environmental Justice and Tribal Relations is hereby established within the department.

(b) Duties of the office shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) Ensuring that the department's programs effectively address the needs of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, California Native American tribes, and farmworkers.
- (2) Providing an evaluation of a range of strategic, scientific, technological, regulatory, and economic issues for the department related to environmental justice and tribal relations.
- (3) Integrating environmental justice considerations into department programs, policies, and initiatives.
- (4) Lessening the environmental impacts on those communities disproportionately burdened by environmental harm and risks.
- (5) Addressing environmental justice by ensuring meaningful involvement of disproportionately burdened communities in department decisionmaking, building capacity to address environmental impacts in disproportionately burdened communities, and promoting collaborative problem solving for issues involving environmental justice.

(6) Strengthening partnerships with other governmental agencies at the federal, city, county, and tribal level regarding environmental justice issues.

(7) Enhancing research and assessment approaches related to environmental justice.

(8) Collaborating with impacted communities and governmental agencies to promote equitable data collection regarding environmental burdens.

(9) Improving access to technical resources for disadvantaged communities.

(10) Enhancing protections for vulnerable communities.