

<http://www.sgvtribune.com/environment-and-nature/20160218/pro-710-freeway-tunnel-advocates-fail-to-elect-member-to-air-quality-board>

San Gabriel Valley Tribune February 19, 2016

Pro 710 Freeway tunnel advocates fail to elect member to air quality board



Michael Cacciotti. (PSN/staff photo by Greg Andersen)

By [Steve Scauzillo](#), San Gabriel Valley Tribune

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DUARTE >> What was billed as a clash between advocates of cleaner air versus those favoring fewer government regulations, as well as between groups in favor and against a 710 Freeway tunnel, ended quickly Thursday in a victory for environmentalists and other entities opposed to the freeway extension.

South Pasadena City Councilman Michael Cacciotti, from a city actively opposed to the 710 completion for over 40 years, was reappointed to the four-county South Coast Air Quality Management District governing board Thursday, handily defeating first-time challenger Rosemead City Councilman Steven Ly.

Most cities [in favor of digging a \\$5.65-billion tunnel](#) under El Sereno, South Pasadena and Pasadena connecting the 710 Freeway from where it ends in Alhambra to the 134/210 freeway interchange cast votes for Ly.

Both Ly and Alhambra City Councilwoman Barbara Messina criticized the AQMD for releasing a blistering assessment of the 710 tunnel plan last summer that said the project would result in higher pollution, and in many other areas was grossly inadequate. That opinion was followed up in similar fashion by a letter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

They contend the agency overstepped its authority. Ly also said that doing nothing continues bad air for the people of Rosemead, Alhambra and Monterey Park due to congestion, something he said was not addressed by the anti-smog agency.

Ly told delegates inside the Duarte Community Center that the anti-smog agency may try to take away local cities' land use authority for large-scale projects such as football stadiums. "We need to make sure that our land use rights continue to be protected," he said.

Alhambra, Monterey Park, Rosemead and San Marino — all members of the 710 Coalition advocating for completing the freeway via a tunnel with toll lanes — voted for Ly. One exception was San Gabriel, whose coalition member voted for Cacciotti. Those against the 710 tunnel voted for Cacciotti, namely: Pasadena, South Pasadena, Glendale, La Cañada Flintridge and Sierra Madre. Cacciotti picked up many other votes from cities not directly involved in the 710 northerly extension: El Monte, West Covina, Monrovia, La Verne, Claremont, Duarte, Glendora, Industry, Irwindale, Pomona and San Fernando.

By a 21-9 vote, Cacciotti, 57, easily bested Ly during a historical meeting of the City Selection Committee in which 30 of 34 cities from eastern Los Angeles County cast votes. He won reappointment in the first tally, something that did not happen during past votes for this AQMD seat and many others. Winning the vote of his peers, combined with capturing the population majority of 1,241,151 to 585,912, earned him a third, four-year term on the 13-member SCAQMD board. The indefatigable advocate for public transit and alternative fuels who rides mass transit to every AQMD meeting in Diamond Bar and even to Thursday's meeting, said at play were multiple issues aside from who will represent the San Gabriel Valley on the anti-smog board.

"Some were the 710, some were large corporations concerned about regulations. But some were environmental groups, bicycle groups concerned about pushing for better air quality," he said after the vote.

Nearly a dozen speakers voiced support for Cacciotti. No one spoke in favor of Ly. Cacciotti spoke of a battery-powered leaf blower and lawn mower program that he said cities can try for free as a way to cut emissions. He demonstrated the tools in front of the group during his speech.

Pasadena Mayor Terry Tornek, who voted for Cacciotti, called him "an environmental icon" who is popular with bicycle groups and other environmental nonprofits and has done a phenomenal job in moving grant monies to cities trying to improve local air quality.

He called the effort to oust him by the pro-710 tunnel cities "doomed" and "foolish" and said the vote proved it. He singled out Messina, who said she was proud to cast her vote for Ly. Tornek said, "It was a bold move of her to try to take him down, but it was doomed. He is just too solid."

Tornek defended the AQMD assessment of the air quality analysis, saying that is the agency's job. He said data suggest that the project will not improve air quality but worsen it.

<http://www.pasadenanow.com/main/michael-cacciotti-re-appointed-to-aqmd-board/>

Michael Cacciotti Re-appointed to AQMD Board

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South Pasadena Councilman Michael Cacciotti was re-appointed to AQMD's Governing Board for the 4-year term 1/15/16 to 1/15/20 at the February 18 meeting of the cities of the Eastern Region of LA County by a 21-9 vote.

Thirty of the region's 34 cities were represented by mayors or members of the respective city councils. Absent were representatives from Bradbury, Burbank, La Puente, and Temple City.

After introductory remarks by the mayor of Torrance, who is chair of the Cities Selection Committee of LA County, the representative from Diamond Bar nominated Rosemead Council Member Steven Ly; the mayor of South Pasadena nominated Michael Cacciotti.

Candidate Steven Ly made a brief statement about his desire to serve local communities but provided no relevant information about his qualifications to address air quality issues or what he would do if elected. Michael made a strong statement detailing his extensive experience in helping the AQMD Board address the region's serious air quality issues and highlighting his serve in aiding cities in the Eastern Region obtain funds in support of local clean air equipment and programs.

About 10-12 members of the public, including several people who identified themselves as members of the Sierra Club, spoke in support of Michael, and a letter in support from the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter Senior Director was read and distributed at the meeting. There were no speakers in support of Steven Ly.

After public comment was concluded, Claremont Council Member Sam Pedroza and Glendale Mayor Ara Najarian spoke in strong support of Cacciotti. No member of the eastern cities spoke in support of Ly.

The vote was then conducted in open session, and it was announced that Cacciotti had won a majority of the cities and a majority of the population of the cities present and voting: Cacciotti received the votes of cities containing in excess of 1 million residents, which Ly had the vote of cities with approximately 500,000 residents.

The meeting was concluded at approximately 11:30 am.

<http://www.dailynews.com/environment-and-nature/20160212/businesses-environmentalists-and-the-710-tunnel-collide-in-aqmd-board-member-battle>

Los Angeles Daily News February 13, 2016

<http://www.sgvtribune.com/environment-and-nature/20160212/businesses-environmentalists-and-the-710-tunnel-collide-in-aqmd-board-member-battle>

San Gabriel Valley Tribune February 13, 2016

Businesses, environmentalists and the 710 tunnel collide in AQMD board member battle



Eight-year SCAQMD board member and South Pasadena Councilman Michael Cacciotti, 57, an advocate for clean fuels and reducing air emissions, is being challenged by Rosemead Councilman Steven Ly. FILE PHOTO

By [Steve Scauzillo](#), San Gabriel Valley Tribune

Posted: 02/12/16, 6:26 PM PST | Updated: 5 days ago

The election of an eastern cities representative to the South Coast Air Quality Management District governing board has become politically charged, as environmentalists, pro-710 Freeway tunnel advocates and business groups lobby for their candidate.

At stake is one seat on the powerful, 13-member anti-smog board, whose makeup recently changed when Santa Ana Mayor Miguel Pulido, a Democrat and friend of the environment, was replaced by Lake Forest Councilman Dwight Robinson, a Republican.

Environmental groups say regulated industries — oil refineries, paint and coatings makers and utilities — that pollute the air are trying to shape the board into a more business-friendly body and soften regulations. They compare this move to the [removal last week of Charles Lester](#), executive director of the California Coastal Commission, who was viewed as favorable to coastal protection versus overdevelopment. Lester was fired by a vote of 7-5 in what some called “a coup” by certain board members appointed by Gov. Jerry Brown, some of whom intimidated the commission held up development projects for years and trampled on property rights.

For decades, businesses have argued the AQMD is too heavy handed, while environmental groups say the agency does not go far enough to cut smog. The four-county agency regulates emissions in Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

In the center of the AQMD controversy is eight-year board member and South Pasadena Councilman Michael Cacciotti, an advocate for clean fuels and reducing air emissions. Cacciotti, 57, an attorney, is being challenged by Rosemead Councilman Steven Ly.

Ly is being supported by the 710 Coalition, made up of the cities of Alhambra, Monterey Park, Rosemead, San Gabriel and San Marino, with support from 15 other Los Angeles County cities, many of which will have a vote in electing Cacciotti or Ly to a four-year term.

The pro-710 tunnel coalition objects to an [AQMD critique of the 710 completion project](#) that would close the gap between Alhambra and Pasadena via a single or dual tunnel running 4.5 miles. The letter was written by Ian MacMillan, the AQMD’s planning and rules manager in August.

As part of the comments on the draft Environmental Impact Report, the AQMD letter said the project would raise the cancer risk in the area and the air quality analysis of carbon monoxide and airborne particulates was incomplete.

Alhambra Councilwoman Barbara Messina, the lead advocate for the tunnel project, said the AQMD overstepped its authority. She pointed the finger at Cacciotti, saying he “uses his position on the AQMD board irresponsibly.” She said the AQMD’s comments on the 710 tunnel is one of the reasons she’s supporting Ly, who favors building the 710 tunnel.

Cacciotti said he had nothing to do with the AQMD letter. He said staff are routinely asked to give their scientific opinion on how a project may affect air quality.

“I never saw the letter until after it was sent out,” he said.

Ly, 31, said his pro-710 tunnel stance is just part of the reason why he's running for the AQMD eastern cities seat. He also wants to see more representatives on the AQMD from areas of low- and middle-income populations.

"This is about the 710, as well as the diversity of the board," Ly said. If elected by the mayors of 34 cities, he would work for clean fuels and more bike lanes, things he has always supported. He said on those issues, he is in sync with Cacciotti.

Sierra Club activist David Czamanske of South Pasadena said business groups, including the Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed), were lobbying to remove Cacciotti. BizFed CEO Tracy Rafter said she did not send a letter to the mayors. The organization did support Judy Mitchell, another AQMD board member, last year, she said. "We pay attention to AQMD board stuff. We do encourage competition," she said.

Ly, who was a BizFed board member, said he would not be surprised if business groups are supporting him. He was CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce from 2011 to 2013.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti has asked mayors to support Cacciotti. In an email to Alhambra Mayor Luis Ayala, Gail Koretz, the mayor's local government liaison, said [Cacciotti was a "strong advocate for the environment"](#) and added: "With recent changes in the board's composition, Mike's credentials as an environmentalist are important to our shared goals."

The meeting of the City Selection Committee of the Eastern Region of Los Angeles County is open to the public. It is scheduled for 10 a.m. Thursday at the Duarte Community Center, 1600 Huntington Drive. All San Gabriel Valley cities are able to vote, plus San Fernando and Santa Clarita.

A candidate needs a majority of votes and a majority of population from the 34 cities.

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[Full bio and more articles by Steve Scauzillo](#)

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<http://www.sgvtribune.com/opinion/20160217/the-aqmd-and-the-san-gabriel-valley-letters>

The AQMD and the San Gabriel Valley: Letters

Posted: 02/17/16, 2:22 PM PST | Updated: 12 hrs ago

[0 Comments](#)

AQMD, San Gabriel Valley

My concern is that [Michael Cacciotti may lose his seat on the AQMD](#), the anti-smog board. Michael possesses a broad knowledge base related to air quality, a requirement for responsible decision making. Working effectively with board members and AQMD staff, the number of unhealthful air days in our region has been reduced by over 30 percent (from 120 to 83 days) since 2008.

He is a man “who walks the talk,” cycling to and from work, providing information related to AQMD’s reports, outreach programs and grant opportunities to city councils, other agencies and multi-ethnic communities. He supports applications from our cities for funding for clean-air vehicles and related recharging stations. We must leave the world of politics and ask our mayors to vote for the person best qualified for this position, Michael Cacciotti.

— *Joan Hillard, South Pasadena*

A clean-air agenda

Before moving to La Verne in 2009 I lived in South Pasadena for nine years. Michael Cacciotti serves in South Pasadena’s city government, and while living there I formed a very positive impression of his service to the city. Michael worked hard to persuade fellow City Council members and community leaders to advance a clean-air agenda. He was instrumental in advocating for purchase of low-emission vehicles for use by city staff. He has enthusiastically supported exchange programs for gasoline-powered leaf blowers and lawn mowers.

He was the key catalyst in establishing the city’s annual Clean Air Car Show, allowing members of the public to view and test-drive electric, natural gas, fuel cell and other low-emission vehicles.

I believe Michael Cacciotti’s service on the board of the AQMD is a natural extension of his commitment to everyone living in the San Gabriel Valley for the right to breath clean air.

— *William Joyce, La Verne*

Fixating on 710 tunnel

Councilwoman Messina is acting irresponsibly by fixating on the pie-in-the-sky 710 tunnel, insisting on wasting over \$133,000 of Alhambra's funds for pro-710 street banners, \$141,000 for pro-710 propaganda party street closures, and \$1.8 million for a tunnel lobbyist. According to the city-sponsored survey done a few months ago for the Alhambra General Plan, less than 4 percent of Alhambrians actually believe the 710 corridor needs to be addressed. The No. 1 change Alhambrians believe will improve the city is engaging in less high-density development and preserving historic characters of neighborhoods, which are areas the current City Council doesn't align itself with, as seen by what's happening throughout Alhambra. The AQMD needs experienced, responsible, qualified members that have the public welfare as their first priority like Councilman Cacciotti, just as Alhambra needs new council members that advocate for the majority of its residents, not a select few.

— *Melissa Michelson, Alhambra*

Combating air pollution

While employed as a professor of chemistry at Pomona College, I served four years as chair of the AQMD Advisory Council where I observed firsthand the professional work of air-quality experts and other scientists. AQMD's professional staff of 300 is of the highest quality. To suggest that they can be manipulated by a member of AQMD's board, as an Alhambra councilwoman did, is to unfairly impugn their integrity. We owe today's much cleaner air to them and to board members such as Michael Cacciotti. They deserve our utmost respect.

— *Freeman Allen, Claremont*

Meet Your Rosemead City Council

[Print](#)

[E-mail](#)

The City Council represents Rosemead at various regional and State organizations such as California Contract Cities Association, League of California Cities, and other groups by serving on their committee or board of directors. Council Member's are appointed to represent our community on a regional and State level, [click here](#) to view the Mayor's Appointments for 2015. Click [here](#) to view the City Council's compensation and benefits.

Mayor Margaret Clark



Margaret Clark has served on the Rosemead City Council since March 1991, including six terms as Mayor. Prior to her election to the City Council she was a Commissioner on the Rosemead Planning and Traffic Commissions. In addition to her council responsibilities, Margaret has been an active leader in national, state and regional organizations and agencies. She was elected by 88 cities to serve as President of the Los Angeles County Division of the League of California Cities and has been a member of the California Contract Cities Association executive board. Margaret also represents the City of Rosemead on the board of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG).

Well respected for her knowledge of water quality and environmental issues, Mrs. Clark was selected by her colleagues from 29 SGVCOG cities to serve as a founding board member on the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountain Conservancy. She has served on the Board of Directors of the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority since its establishment in 1992 by legislative action to oversee clean-up of one of the largest Superfund sites in the nation. Margaret's environmental credentials also include membership on the National League of Cities Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee as well as numerous other environmental committee assignments such as membership on the governing board of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel River Watershed Council.

Prior to matriculating from college, Margaret studied in Europe at the University of Bordeaux through the University of California Education Abroad Program. She holds a bachelors degree and teaching credential from UCLA, where she met her husband Jim. Soon thereafter, they chose Rosemead in which to reside and raise their family. Feel free to send Council Member Clark an

e-mail at clarkeesc@yahoo.com or call her at (626) 833-6673.

Council Member Steven Ly



Steven Ly was elected to the Rosemead City Council in March 2009. At the age of 24, he was the youngest council member to serve the City of Rosemead. He also served as the City's youngest Mayor at the age of 27 from March 2011 to March 2012. Council Member Ly has been a resident of Rosemead since the age of three. He attended Willard Elementary School, Temple Intermediate, and Rosemead High School.

Steven is the Chief Executive Officer for the Regional Chamber of Commerce – San Gabriel Valley, representing the business community in the Southeast San Gabriel Valley. He is also the publisher of the San Gabriel Valley Business Journal.

Steven graduated from UCLA with bachelor's degree in both Political Science and Public Policy. He is currently active in various non-profit organizations including his fraternity's alumni association, Delta Kappa Epsilon, various UCLA alumni programs, Rosemead Relay for Life, and Rosemead Kiwanis. He is also active in helping to fundraise money for Rosemead and San Gabriel High Schools.

Steven currently represents the City of Rosemead in a variety of regional agencies. He is a Council Member for Metro's San Gabriel Valley Service Sector. He also serves as a member of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership board of directors and vice chair of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments' Transportation Committee. He is also currently the Treasurer of the League of California Cities Los Angeles Division.

Steven is a first-generation American and among the first generation in his family to graduate from college. Steven's father was an electrician and his mother an office clerk. Steven has a brother who currently attends Cal Poly, Pomona. He has a number of extended family members who live in Rosemead.

Steven believes in open communication and transparency and looks forward to increasing constituent access to City Council through Town Hall meetings and various discussion forums. If you have any questions or concerns, Steven encourages the community to contact him by calling

him at (626) 320-5486 or e-mailing him at sly@cityofrosemead.org.

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