



Hopeful Beginnings & News on ROC's 2022 Projects

Greetings!

We enter this New Year with great optimism and also an awareness that some key issues need all of our attention right now. As COVID-19 and its many strains rage on we must focus on the many opportunities the pandemic present to us and fight to fix what's broken.

CA Governor Newsom's 2022-23 Budget Proposal



We welcome Governor Newsom's budget investments in public health, which includes \$300 million for public health infrastructure, including \$200 million to shore up local health jurisdictions, along with other dedicated funding for COVID-19 and workforce development. However, it is very disappointing that the Governor's proposed 2022 budget left out dedicated funding for a core piece of our state's public health and equity infrastructure: community-based

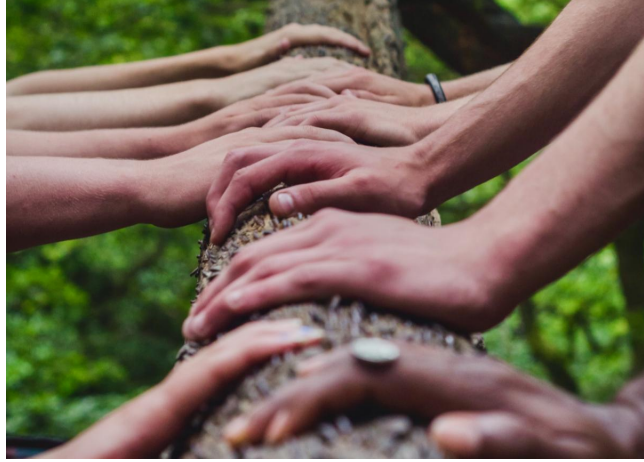
organizations. While there are efforts to advance equity, the budget summary also failed to mention racial justice at all. [READ MORE](#)

Updates on ROC Projects

Health Equity & Racial Justice Fund

Roots of Change and others are working to remedy food injustices. The stark realities exposed by COVID-19 demonstrate more help is needed, and needed now.

The [California Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund](#) is a bold, innovative proposal to address both the social determinants of health and structural racism. The Fund will invest in community-based organizations, clinics, and tribal organizations to transform community conditions and institutional/government systems to promote health equity and racial justice. *Image: Shane Rounce, Unsplash*



Since the Governor **did not include specific funding for community-based organizations (CBOs)**, **we need your help to remind legislators** in the weeks ahead that we need solutions to local health equity and racial justice issues. Please help spread the word on social media and in your networks to urge Governor Newsom to include an annual investment of at least \$100 million in the Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund in California's 2022/23 budget!

Post on your social media and sign on today; together we can make funding for equity and justice a reality!

Health Equity & Racial Justice
Fund - Social Media Toolkit

Sign-on
Letter



AB 125, Equitable Economic Recovery, Healthy Food Access, Climate Resilient Farms, and Worker Protection Bond Act of 2022

ROC and its [AB 125 coalition partners](#) support state investments in a resilient and equitable food and farming system. Our coalition sponsors the bill

introduced in February 2021 by [Assemblymember Robert Rivas \(D - Hollister\)](#). The bond measure would provide key investments in disadvantaged communities, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, tribes, small- and medium-sized farms and small businesses. Given the state's budget surpluses, the bond has been delayed and the coalition has supported Mr. Rivas in seeking budget requests. In the current budget our requests brought \$1.3 billion to the goals we seek. Our coalition is currently working on the requests for the 2022-23 budget. Stay tuned! *Image: Doris Meier*

Local Regenerative Meat Project

In 2021 we released [our report](#) on the inadequacy of California's meat processing regulations and system. This year we will work with the

California Department of Food and Agriculture, farmers, ranchers, processors, UC Cooperative Extension experts and advocates to implement that report's recommendations. ROC once again joined with the [UC Davis Food Systems Lab](#) and applied to USDA for funds to develop two high value meat supply chains serving small- and mid-size producers and their processors. We received a 3-year grant and are beginning the work in the weeks ahead. We will work with producers, processors and buyers to bring high quality meat from farm and ranches, processed locally, to Bay Area and Sacramento Metro markets. Look for updates and ways to get involved in supporting smart, humane, healthy and regenerative meat sources. *Image: Doris Meier*



Achieving Resilient Communities Project Update

ROC and its [PHI program partners](#) continue our work in Ventura County to support with local advocates and the ag industry to protect farmworkers from heat, which public health experts believe may become the biggest threat to human life in this century. The Governor's proposed budget for 2022-23 contains many sources of funds to

implement actions our project is discussing with our frontline partners: [CAUSE](#), [MICOP](#), [Lideres Campesinas](#) and a committee of thoughtful ag leaders, we call the Ag Leaders Brain Trust. Listen to this week's [Flipping the Table podcast](#) with Maricela Morales the executive director of CAUSE, who was also the ROC board chair a decade ago. We are also beginning work in Kern County, which faces very serious challenges keeping it farmworkers safe from heat and wildfire smoke. Our primary partner there is [Central California Environmental Justice Network](#) (an AB 125 coalition partner).

Image: Tim Mossholder, Unsplash

The 2021 Food & Farm Scorecard and Policy Champions

The 2021 Food & Farm Scorecard tracks eight key bills that have an impact on essential food system workers, solutions to the COVID and climate crises, healthy food access, and systemic racism and hunger. Of the bills tracked, three were achieved via legislation or the budget with three more having partial wins or being carried into the 2022 legislative cycle. The Scorecard also features our three Food Policy Champions: [Senator Nancy Skinner](#) and [Assemblymembers Richard Bloom](#) and [Robert Rivas](#). They all went above and beyond in support of our goals and we thank them!

2021 Food & Farm Scorecard

SENATOR NANCY SKINNER (SD-09) 2021 FOOD & FARM CHAMPION



California state Senator Nancy Skinner, D-Berkeley, has championed several efforts to support sustainable, climate-smart farming and access to a healthy food system for all Californians:

- ✓ Authored the Free School Meals for All Act, the first-ever state legislation to call for universal meals for all school children, enacted in June 2021 and fully funded in the state budget
- ✓ Created a new registry for carbon sequestration projects on natural and working lands that can help farmers access private climate funding to implement climate-smart practices
- ✓ Oversaw countless food justice and sustainable farming victories in the state budget, including the largest-ever expenditure for Healthy Soils practices on farms.



bit.ly/2021FoodFarmScorecard

ASSEMBLYMEMBER RICHARD BLOOM (AD-50) 2021 FOOD & FARM CHAMPION



Richard Bloom, representing communities from West Los Angeles to Agoura Hills, has been a champion of agricultural and food policies throughout his almost decade of service in the legislature.

- ✓ Authored years of sugar sweetened beverage legislation in attempts to prevent diet-related chronic health problems, support healthy food access, school meals, and public health.
- ✓ Has aimed to center investments in community-led prevention measures with food systems as a key point of intervention.
- ✓ Championed the innovative Community Food Hubs bill to benefit small and historically underserved farmers and regional economies.



bit.ly/2021FoodFarmScorecard

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ROBERT RIVAS (AD-30) 2021 FOOD & FARM CHAMPION



Robert Rivas represents communities along the Central Coast. Growing up in farmworker housing, Rivas has been a fierce leader for farmworkers, carrying and passing farmworker legislation annually.

- ✓ Authored landmark legislation AB 125, the Food and Farm Resilience Bond, an ambitious piece of legislation that helped secure nearly \$1 billion in funding to support a more just food and ag system.
- ✓ Authored legislation supporting access to land for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) farmers
- ✓ As Chair of Assembly Agriculture, has hosted an informational hearing about implementing the 2017 Farmer Equity Act, including a panel of BIPOC farmers.



bit.ly/2021FoodFarmScorecard

Season 4, Episode 1



We're back!

Check out our first podcast episode in 2022!

Michael Dimock talks with Maricela Morales about the Achieving Resilient Communities project and her work with Central Coast Alliance for Sustainable Economy. Maricela is a social justice warrior and the project is a core initiative of Roots of Change and its partners at the Public Health Institute.

Image source: <https://causenow.org/>



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We seek a just and healthy agriculture and food economy that is a solution to the many challenges of our time, particularly the climate crisis and the wealth gap. And we cannot do this work without your support. **Please think of us as you make your**

donations to those seeking to improve our world.

Thank you for your support!

Doris Meier

Editor of the PULSE

Roots of Change

A Program of the Public Health Institute

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