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City of Albuquerque/Albuquerque Environmental Health Department: Natural Resources Defense Council Submits Title VI Civil Rights Complaint to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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The Natural Resources Defense Council and Los Jardines Institute (collectively, “NRDC”) submitted a May 30th document to EPA styled:

Complaint under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Environmental Protection Agency’s implementing regulations regarding discrimination by the Albuquerque Environmental Health Department and the City of Albuquerque in the administration of the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Air Quality Program (“Complaint”)

The Complaint was submitted to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 addresses the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the Environmental Health Department (“Health Department”).

The organizations allege that the County is the home of a number of lower-income Latino communities and communities of color whose residents suffer disproportionate health burdens from air pollution. They allege disparate impact discrimination by the Health Department. As a result, the Complaint requests that EPA impose enforceable measures to address these issues.

Examples of actions that EPA is requested to undertake include:

- Find that the City of Albuquerque and the Health Department are in violation of Title VI in failing in its air permitting program to prevent disparate impacts on race.
- Find that to comply with Title VI the Health Department must implement a cumulative impacts rule and apply it in its air permitting decisions.
- Require the Health Department to complete a data-based overburdened-areas map by January 21, 2025, as required by the Health, Environment, and Equity Impacts Rule enacted by the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board.
- Investigate whether the Albuquerque City Council and Health Department committed acts of intentional race discrimination.

A copy of the Complaint can be downloaded [here](#).

