

April 20, 2023

Dear California Air Resources Board:

As Black Church leaders, we have seen for ourselves how climate change hits African American communities in a particularly harsh way. We know firsthand the tragedies of environmental justice. Communities of color face an undue, disproportionate and unjust burden of air pollution and climate impacts from the production of fossil fuels. Reducing emissions from the transportation sector offers an opportunity to reduce the pollution and climate impact burden in our communities.

Exhaust from diesel-powered heavy duty vehicles is the single largest source of smog pollution in California and is one of the main pollution sources in Black communities across the US. This disproportional impact by truck pollution is a result of historical and ongoing systemic racism, which has allowed interstates and heavily travelled roads to dissect our communities and neighborhoods. This has resulted, tragically, in higher rates of asthma and other respiratory illnesses in Black communities.

Trucks, which only account for 10 percent of vehicles on the road, produce nearly 25 percent of the transportation sectors greenhouse gases, which is fueling climate change. A 2021 [report](#) stated that a 62% reduction in diesel emissions would decrease race-ethnicity and income inequalities by 37%. Big rigs, which produce 14 times more smog-forming pollution and 4 times more deadly diesel soot than vans or smaller trucks, are responsible for a majority of the most harmful pollution faced by communities of color.

While we applaud the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for including a target of 100 percent pollution-free truck sales by 2036, we, as communities of color need more. To further reduce the sacrifices of health and wellbeing that our Black families are making daily, CARB must finalize an Advanced Fleet Rule that also applies to fleets of 10 or more trucks including mid-size and big-rig fleets. A strong rule from California has the added advantage of influencing the actions of other states, the Federal regulation and manufacturers across the country.

The California Air Resources Board has an opportunity to help address the injustice of pollution and climate change by enacting the strongest possible heavy duty truck standards that drives us swiftly towards zero emissions. We urge CARB to prioritize justice and finalize the strongest possible Advanced Fleet Rule in order to protect the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Sincerely,

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