

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Department of Energy and Environment



California Air Resources Board  
2828, 1001 I St,  
Sacramento, CA 95814

September 20, 2018

Re: Proposed Amendments to the Low-Emission Vehicle III Greenhouse Gas Emission Regulation

Dear Members of the Board,

I am Tommy Wells, Director of the District of Columbia's Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE). In May, DOEE submitted comments in response to the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) request for input on potential clarification of the "deemed to comply" provision for LEV III GHG emission regulations for motor vehicles encouraging CARB to reject any weakened emission standards adopted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as non-compliant with California's emission requirements. We reaffirm that position and our support today.

In 2008, recognizing the need to reduce vehicle emissions, the Council of the District of Columbia passed the Clean Cars Act of 2008 (D.C. Official Code § 50-731 *et seq.*), which found that the adoption of California vehicle emissions standards help to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.<sup>1</sup> The Act required the Mayor to establish and maintain a low emissions vehicle program by adopting California vehicle emissions standards and compliance requirements. Shortly thereafter, EPA, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), CARB, and automakers worked together to establish a national program of vehicle standards for GHG emissions and fuel economy. Under the national program, CARB deemed federal GHG emissions standards to comply with their own, based upon the understanding that those standards would achieve comparable emissions reductions to California's and be based upon sound technological and scientific review. The District was therefore able to rely on the national program for GHG emission reductions from vehicle emissions standards and compliance requirements.

During the 2018 Mid-Term Evaluation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards for Model Year 2022–2025 Light-Duty Vehicles, EPA determined that the existing federal GHG emission standards for model year 2022–2025 light-duty vehicles were inappropriate and has proposed

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<sup>1</sup> "Implementation of the important carbon emissions standards would have a helpful effect on global warming, as CO<sub>2</sub> from vehicles contributes to the growing crisis of global warming." Committee on Public Works and the Environment Report on Bill 17-99, the "Clean Cars Act of 2008," January 3, 2008, p. 4.

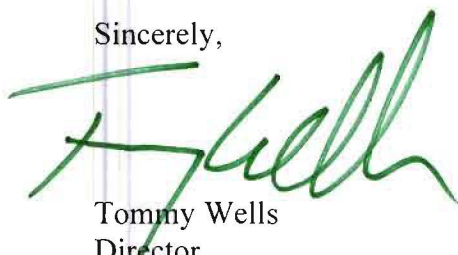
making them less stringent.<sup>2</sup> In response, the Mayor executed an order necessary to formally adopt California’s emission standards in order to meet the District’s GHG reduction goals.

With vehicle emissions constituting 21% of the District’s GHG emissions<sup>3</sup>, reducing vehicle emissions is an important component of the District’s GHG reduction goals. Relying, in part, on the federal GHG tailpipe emission standards, the District committed to reduce GHG emissions 50% below 2006 levels by the year 2032.<sup>4</sup>

The District anticipates harms from the effects of global warming. By 2080, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conservatively predicts up to 3.4 feet of additional sea level rise in the District. This change can result in increased flooding and damage. The average summer high temperature is projected to rise from 87°F to 97°F by 2080.<sup>5</sup> These projections are tied to how quickly global GHG emissions fall. The District therefore has an interest in seeing vehicle GHG tailpipe standards maintained at their current level, and not relaxed, as EPA has proposed to do.

In light of the federal rollback, the District plans to adopt California’s vehicle emission requirements as part of achieving the District’s stated reduction targets. As such, DOEE fully supports CARB’s efforts to only accept compliance with the federal standards that achieve effectively equivalent GHG emission reductions to California’s LEV III program.

Sincerely,



Tommy Wells  
Director

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<sup>2</sup> 83 Fed. Reg. 16077 (Apr. 13, 2018) (“2018 MTE Determination”).

<sup>3</sup> Climate Ready DC at 2, [https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/service\\_content/attachments/CRDC-Report-FINAL-Web.pdf](https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/service_content/attachments/CRDC-Report-FINAL-Web.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Clean Energy DC available at [https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/publication/attachments/Clean\\_Energy\\_DC\\_2016\\_final\\_print\\_single\\_pages\\_102616\\_print.pdf](https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/publication/attachments/Clean_Energy_DC_2016_final_print_single_pages_102616_print.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Climate Ready DC, *supra* note 3 at 2.