

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Clerk's Office,
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Please Adopt a Strong Advanced Clean Trucks Rule -- Proposed Advanced Clean Trucks Regulation

To California Air Resources Board Chair Mary D. Nichols and Board Members:

I, along with all California residents who share an interest in the health and environment of our state and beyond, support the California Air Resources Board (CARB) taking measures to pass the strongest possible Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) rule.

“Our duty to the whole, including to the unborn generations, bids us to restrain an unprincipled present-day minority from wasting the heritage of these unborn generations. The movement for the conservation of wildlife and the larger movement for the conservation of all our natural resources are essentially democratic in spirit, purpose and method.”
-- Theodore Roosevelt

Your recently updated Advanced Clean Truck Rule will help get cleaner electric trucks on our roads, improve air quality, fight climate change, and grow the state's economy. While much has been done to improve air quality over the last thirty years, California still has the worst air in the nation, and trucks are a major source of dangerous air pollution. It's more important than ever that we move forward with health-protecting, life-saving pollution protections like the Advanced Clean Truck rule. We've long known that our air quality crisis leaves Californians gasping for breath, and worsens and shortens lives. In light of new research from Harvard that connects COVID-19 mortality to long-term exposure to air pollution, shifting heavy polluters like diesel trucks in the state to zero emissions solutions has taken on a new significance.

This new rule would be the first of its kind in the nation promoting the sale of electric trucks, putting our state on a path to reducing air pollution and climate impacts from diesel trucks for many years to come. California can and should set a strong precedent for others to follow.

In December 2019, thousands of people submitted public comments calling for a stronger ACT rule. And advocates and community members, including from regions heaviest hit by truck pollution, showed up in numbers at the December CARB board meeting to provide testimony. I appreciate CARB's response that emphasized prioritizing our communities' public health and combatting climate change. I believe the new proposal, roughly doubling the sales percentages from the last proposal, is a step in the right direction.

“As we peer into society's future, we—you and I, and our government—must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering for our own ease and convenience the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren

without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage. We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow.”
-- Dwight D. Eisenhower

In the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, numerous industries pressuring CARB to roll back policies such as the ACT rule, and I urge you to reject these attacks. This is exactly the wrong move at a time when protecting public health and creating new economic opportunities is critical. This rule will have long term benefits for our state, and would not otherwise likely be implemented until several years from now. Furthermore, studies have long shown that diesel pollution is linked to a number of respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. New research suggests that long term exposure to air pollution, such as from diesel emissions, is associated with higher risk of death from COVID-19.

That’s why it’s more critical than ever that we enact strong policies—like the Advanced Clean Truck Rule—in California that protect communities from dangerous air pollution. California has long proven that we can clean up our air and protect our climate while stewarding a strong economy. Regulations like the Advanced Clean Truck rule can spur thousands of new clean energy jobs. They will play an important role in California’s economic recovery while also saving everyday Californians from the economic toll of lost workdays and the healthcare costs of pollution-related illness. It’s time for everyone to do their part for California’s air—and all of our lungs—as we face challenges to public health in the Golden State like never before.

I urge you to stay the course and pass a strong Advanced Clean Truck rule, as well as other transportation regulations that will promote a zero-emissions future. We can’t afford to lose ground on key public health measures during a public health crisis. A strong standard for manufacturers is critical for California to act on climate and meet air quality standards, especially in communities disproportionately impacted by air pollution. Considering the health, economic, and environmental benefits from this rule, I urge you to reject any calls from industry to weaken or delay this important rulemaking process, and to instead make sure the state adopts the strongest Advanced Clean Truck Rule possible.

“A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”
-- Aldo Leopold

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. Please do NOT add my name to your mailing list. I will learn about future developments on this issue from other sources.

Sincerely,
Christopher Lish
San Rafael, CA
