



September 18, 2023

The Honourable Steven S. Cliff, Ph.D.
Executive Officer
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
ATTENTION: Clerk's Office

RE: Proposed Amendments to the Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle Omnibus Regulation

Dear Dr. Cliff:

On behalf of Transportation Charter Services, Inc, I would like to submit the following comments in response to the Notice of Public Comment Period on Proposed Amendments to the Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle Omnibus Regulation (Omnibus regulation), posted on August 1, 2023 (Notice). Although we do appreciate the Air Resources Board's (CARB) proposal to align with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) 2022 Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle Standards final rule, including the new inducement schedules, the Omnibus regulation even with the proposed new legacy engine provisions, is going to interfere with my ability to purchase new motorcoaches over the next three years. Rather than put my business at risk from this hardship, **I respectfully request that CARB provide a short-term exemption from the rule for motorcoach engines, during model year 2024 through model year 2026.**

My company provides charter bus transportation to the Los Angeles, Orange County and San Diego markets. We currently have 93 vehicles in our fleet providing service for professional sports, collegiate sports travel, the Cruise industry, student tour travel, corporate transportation, the tour and travel industry the military and Fema.

Please know that my company does support CARB's goal of reducing emissions and addressing climate change. Motorcoach operations have a long history of providing environmental benefits, particularly here in California. Motorcoaches are the most energy efficient and lowest emissions form of passenger transportation (on a per person basis), taking cars off the road and reducing congestion. Through the years our engines have become cleaner, and we are burning cleaner fuels. We also support advancement of emissions reducing technologies. But the advancement of these technologies cannot be at the expense of continuing our business.

Under the Omnibus regulation, even with the amendments to the legacy engine provisions, motorcoach manufacturers are not going to receive an adequate supply of engines to produce new motorcoaches for model years 2024 through 2026. Apparently, the rule restricts the number of legacy engines manufacturers can produce, and because these engines can go into trucks or motorcoaches, the motorcoach manufacturers are being told their allocation of engines will be

few to none, during this time period. Based on this forecast, we are told no new motorcoach equipment will likely be available until model year 2027.

In order to maintain a modern fleet and to keep up with the new EPA requirements we replace 12 vehicles pr year. The vehicles that we retire which are approximately 6 years old are sold out of state. The pandemic significantly affected our fleet replacement plan as we went through a 2-year period where the manufacturers were not producing new equipment due to the fact our industry was almost completely shuttered. Now that business in back we are 3 years behind in our fleet replacement plan and the current Omnibus rule inhibits us from purchasing new equipment for 2024 – 2026 forcing us to continue to operate older less environmentally friendly equipment with more antiquated technology. Furthermore, the older equipment is not equipped with the enhanced safety features that the State of California is requiring on new equipment which puts public safety at risk.

This rule puts operators in California at risk of staying in business because a great number of the business contract we service has provisions built in for equipment that is 3-5 years or newer. With the current rule we would be unable to comply with these contracts subsequently being in default and consequently losing the business. Without adequate passenger transportation available business from all market segments that do business in California would most likely not come to California and move their business to other states which would greatly affect the California economy and eliminate jobs.

It will cause severe hardship to my company and operations if there are no new motorcoaches available for purchase over the next three years. Considering motorcoach operations already provide significant environmental benefits, and that this issue is only short-term, **please amend the Omnibus regulation to include an exemption for engines used in motorcoaches for model years 2024-2026.**

Respectfully,



Terry Fischer

President – Transportation Charter Services, Inc