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Assembly California Legislature



CHRIS R. HOLDEN
CHAIR: ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON UTILITIES AND ENERGY
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FORTY-FIRST DISTRICT

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BLACK CAUCUS

April 6, 2017

Mary D. Nichols
California Air Resources Board (CARB)
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Nichols,

California recently adopted the country's most ambitious climate goals pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. While the approach to improve air quality and the environment is multifaceted, part of that pledge involves reducing GHGs from cars and trucks and expanding electric vehicle ownership.

California has a unique opportunity to accelerate electric vehicle infrastructure and use stemming from the 2016 Volkswagen (VW) settlement. As you know, the Obama administration, CARB, and then-California State Attorney General Kamala Harris carefully negotiated a consent decree under which VW agreed to spend up to \$14.7 billion to settle allegations of cheating emissions tests.

The consent decree mandates that VW invest \$800 million over the next ten years in California, with a focus on expanding electric vehicle use and infrastructure in disadvantaged communities where air quality is often poorest. We are satisfied with the agreement and support Appendix C, which outlines the responsibilities of CARB and EPA for properly executing VW's proposal ensuring safeguards to uphold fair competition, broad geographic deployment and technology-neutral, open-source standards.

Some entities, including conservative think tanks such as the Competitive Enterprise Institute and Americans for Prosperity, want to roll back provisions of the decree. Efforts by these groups as well as others attempting to reassess the agreement present major risks for California, including:

- Delayed investments in zero emission vehicles and infrastructure in California, thereby compromising the state's ability to reach its climate goals by 2030.
- Renegotiation of the settlement with terms less favorable to what was negotiated last year.
- Elimination of funding altogether by a federal administration that has been hostile to clean energy goals and mandates.

Our communities cannot wait. Any setbacks would be disastrous for achieving our climate goals in California and for expanding EV use and access.

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VW's investment in California will create solid jobs with good wages in the areas of construction, utilities, manufacturing and system installation, operations and maintenance. It will also build infrastructure that vastly improves air quality and access to electric vehicles. As such, I offer my support for the VW settlement and request it be implemented without delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Holden", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris R. Holden
Assembly Member; 41st District