

Dr. Steven Maxwell
09-10-8

Health Network for Clean Air

A network of health organizations working to improve air quality in California



December 8, 2009

Chairman Mary Nichols and Members
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95812

Re: Strong Support For CARB Statewide Truck And Bus Regulation

Dear Chairman Nichols and Members of the Board,

The undersigned health and medical organizations and public health professionals strongly support the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) landmark rule – the Statewide Truck And Bus Regulation – that will cut 80 percent of carcinogenic diesel soot from all the big rig trucks on California roads and highways over the next decade. Our health professionals see firsthand the direct effects of diesel pollution in increased asthma attacks and illnesses that lead to doctor and emergency room visits. California needs this regulation to save lives today and protect our most impacted communities.

CARB must move forward now to clean up diesel engines and protect public health. While there have been calls to delay state diesel regulations until the economy recovers, such inaction would cause serious public harm and suffering. A large body of scientific literature has clearly established the link between diesel pollution and premature death and illness. Diesel pollution sickens and kills thousands of residents annually in California, and disproportionately impacts our poorest and most vulnerable individuals including seniors, people with heart or lung disease, children and infants. The state's sensible rules to reduce toxic soot pollution over time will protect lives and save California far more than it will cost.

Pollution from diesel buses and trucks comprises the largest source of cancer-causing emissions in California, making them the top air pollution-related cancer risk for state residents. In addition to aggravating a variety of respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses and contributing to thousands of hospitalizations each year, exposure to the toxic air contaminants contained in diesel exhaust has also been linked to developmental harm to fetuses, decreased lung growth and development in children, and other serious health and reproductive problems. Diesel truck drivers are especially at risk, and are 1.5 to 2 times more likely to develop lung cancer, as compared to workers not exposed to diesel exhaust.

The benefits of the diesel bus and truck rule cannot be overstated. The regulation will prevent 9,400 premature deaths, 950,000 lost workdays, 150,000 cases of asthma-related and other lower respiratory symptoms, and 3,000 hospital admissions over the next 15 years. These health benefits translate into a savings to the state between \$48 and \$68 billion, a savings more than nine times greater than the cost of the rule.

Strong government policies to control harmful emissions from trucks and buses are critical to saving lives and improving health. But more importantly, this regulation is needed to address health inequities in low income communities and communities of color who pay the highest price in terms of increased risk of death and illness caused by proximity to busy roads and freeways.

We support the California Air Resources Board's strong actions to regulate diesel pollution and oppose any attempts to roll back these life-saving regulations.

Public Health and Medical Organizations in Support of CARB Regulations

Bonnie Holmes-Gen, Senior Policy Director
American Lung Association in California

Kris Calvin, MA, Executive Director
American Academy of Pediatrics, California District

Israel De Alba, MD, MPH, President Elect
American Cancer Society, California Division, Inc.

Jamie Morgan, Senior Legislative Director
American Heart Association

Jeanne Rizzo, RN, President and CEO
Breast Cancer Fund

Andy Katz, MCP, Government Relations Director
Breathe California

Susan Hogeland, CAE, Executive Vice President
California Academy of Family Physicians

Veronica Ramirez, Research Associate
California Medical Association

Asha Devereaux, MD, MPH, President
California Thoracic Society

Anne Kelsey-Lamb, MPH, Director
**Community Action to Fight Asthma (CAFA),
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (RAMP)**

Jocelyn Vivar, MPH
East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice

Cynthia Bergmann, President
Fresno Madera Medical Society

Erin Huffer, MPH, Project Manager
Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma

John L Digges, MD, PHD, MPH, FAAP
Kern County Medical Society

Kevin Hamilton, RRT, RCP
Medical Advocates for Healthy Air (Fresno)

Connie Mull, RN, Chair
Merced-Mariposa County Asthma Coalition

Robert M. Gould, MD, President
Physicians for Social Responsibility, SF-Bay Area Chapter

Harry Wang, MD
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Sacramento Chapter

Robin Salsburg, JD, Senior Staff Attorney
Public Health Law and Policy

Mary A. Pittman, DrPH, President and CEO
Public Health Institute

Steve Heilig, MPH, Director Public Health & Education
San Francisco Medical Society

William Sandberg, Executive Director
Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society

Shan Magnuson
Sonoma County Asthma Coalition

Sonal Patel, MD
White Memorial Pediatric Medical Group