



# CALIFORNIA TOW TRUCK ASSOCIATION

*"Developing Professionalism in the Towing Industry"*

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December 14, 2010

Mary D. Nichols  
Chair, California Air Resources Board  
1001 I Street, P.O. Box 2815  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815  
[mnichols@arb.ca.gov](mailto:mnichols@arb.ca.gov)

**Re: CTTA Written Comment on the California Air Resources Board's Proposed Modifications to the Truck and Bus Regulation (Proposed Modifications to the Final Regulation Order to Reduce Emissions of Diesel Particulate Matter, Oxides of Nitrogen, and Other Pollutants from In-Use Heavy-Duty Diesel-Fueled Vehicles)**

Dear Chairwoman Nichols:

On behalf of the membership of the California Tow Truck Association (CTTA) we are writing to express our continued reservations with the California Air Resources Board (ARB)'s Truck and Bus Regulation.

Founded in 1969, the California Tow Truck Association represents over 1,000 towing companies within the state of California, providing vital services to the state's motoring public. Our members employ approximately 15,000 people across the state. Unfortunately, the current poor economy continues to wreak havoc on our members' companies.

While the recent proposed amendments may provide some much needed relief for our membership, without even further delay or modifications the regulation will have dire financial implications upon our industry, at a time when our industry can least afford it. The economic reality will be a shortage of tow trucks being able to respond to minor and major traffic incidents throughout the state. Tow Truck response times to these incidents will increase causing increases in the amount of time thousands of vehicles will sit idling in traffic gridlock. As a result, health considerations will be compounded and the safety of our state's motoring public will be jeopardized.

As we have discussed on many occasions with ARB Staff, heavy-duty tow trucks of 33,001 GVWR and above continue to be particularly impacted by the regulation, as they tend to be traditionally driven for only a low number of miles each year (thus tend to be long-lasting, yet older model trucks) and, as specialty trucks, are extremely expensive to replace. Replacement costs for these specialty trucks range between \$325K to \$750K, very similar to the replacement costs for emergency vehicles such as fire fighting apparatus. Unfortunately the rule does not differentiate between a long-haul truck driving 200K

miles/year and such a heavy-duty tow truck driven only 30K miles/year; the schedule for replacing both trucks is based solely on its model engine year. Furthermore, retrofit devices are oftentimes impractical as modification to these trucks would cost far more than just the retrofit device installation. Bodies would have to be modified to create space to physically enable installation. This process would be both costly and time consuming resulting in excessive out of service time.

It has always been our argument that these heavy-duty low-mileage vehicles are utilized to clean-up the most disastrous accidents on our roadways as part of the CHP and local law enforcement tow rotation lists. With so few miles driven and such a huge cost of replacement (hundreds of thousands of dollars in specialty equipment), these trucks understandably tend to be replaced at a slower pace than smaller tow trucks. Our members have mortgages on these trucks, and their business model is based on the assumption that they can get decades of service out of the vehicles. Requiring them to replace these trucks ahead of schedule will have one of two direct consequences – get out of heavy-duty towing completely or take a massive financial risk in an unstable economy by purchasing a new heavy-duty tow truck to meet the rule requirements. Either way there's a strong likelihood there will be less heavy-duty tow truck operators in California. As such, roads will remain uncleared, traffic will back up, vehicle emissions will increase, and our economy and environment will be further harmed. It is ironic that the very air the rule is designed to clean will actually become even more polluted.

We urge you to strongly consider concessions for these trucks, as well as delaying the rule until California's economy fully recovers.

Finally, it is absolutely vital that ARB staff thoroughly evaluate the November 15, 2010 report "Review of CARB On-Road Heavy-Duty Diesel Emissions Inventory" prepared by Sierra Research as accurate information is critical when considering a rule with such expansive consequences.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me should you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Jeff Hunter  
Executive Director, CTTA

CC: Air Resources Board Members:

Dr. John R. Balmes, M.D.  
Ms. Sandra Berg  
Ms. Dorene D'Adamo  
Mr. Ken Yeager  
Ms. Lydia H. Kennard  
Mr. Ronald O. Loveridge  
Ms. Barbara Riordan  
Mr. Ron Roberts  
Mr. Daniel Sperling  
Dr. John G. Telles, M.D.