



Testimony of Upstream Public Health to the  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
In support of SB824  
Heidi Guenin, Policy Manager – Transportation & Land Use

March 31st, 2015

Dear Chair Edwards and committee members,

The emissions from older, dirty diesel engines are hurting our health and killing over 400 Oregonians each year. Diesel engine emissions cause a myriad of diseases, costing Oregonians over \$3 billion annually.

High levels of diesel emissions can be found around the state. And, toxic pollution from diesel emissions is found in higher concentrations in neighborhoods closer to highways and some industrial sites. This disproportionate concentration of toxics causes an undue burden for communities of color and low-income families.

Upstream Public Health supports strong legislation to reduce the dangers of diesel engines. We will see great health benefits as older diesel engines are replaced with newer, cleaner engines or retrofitted to eliminate almost all of the dangerous emissions. California is already phasing out these older engines, and they have seen the benefits of cleaner air.

The bad news for Oregon is that some of the older diesel engines that cannot be used in California are now being sold in Oregon. Our state should not be used as a dumping ground for these dirty engines from California. Phasing out of the older engines needs to begin as soon as possible in Oregon.

Upstream Public Health gets its name from the metaphor of preventing health problems at their source, so that all Oregonians can be healthy and we avoid unnecessary health care costs. This bill will do just that – prevent health problems at the source – by reducing the toxic emissions from older diesel engines.

We want to thank Chair Edwards and members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources for taking on the urgent issue of reducing the hazardous emissions from diesel engines. We support the phasing out of older diesel engines, and urge the committee to pass SB824.

Thank you for your time,

Heidi Guenin  
Policy Manager, Transportation & Land Use