

March 31, 2015

Oregon Legislature
House Health Care Committee
Attn: Maia Daniel, maia.daniel@state.or.us



Re: Support for HB 3310

Dear Chair Greenlick and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, I would offer our support for HB 3310. Environmental health inequity has been a concern in Oregon for a long time, and air pollution is one of the paramount environmental justice issues.

I served on DEQ's Portland Air Toxics Solutions Advisory Committee (PATSAAC), and assisted the agency in modeling the distribution of air pollutants across the metro region, overlaid with population demographics. Communities of color and low-income communities face a greater risk from on-road mobile air toxics, particularly from diesel emissions, and is a leading cause of health risk. And yet, this modeling was based on outdated diesel standards that are not as protective as they should be. Using more protective health-based standards, like they use in California, would have shown an even greater risk over health-based benchmarks for communities of color and low-income communities across the region.

Increasing the health-based diesel standard will achieve multiple benefits:

- It will offer a margin of safety for quantitative risk assessment that too often under values the risk to communities and subpopulations with heightened susceptibility or vulnerabilities, such as communities of color, children, and seniors
- It will better protect against cumulative health risks, as diesel is but one pollutant in communities that are overburdened from multiple and cumulative exposure
- It will more accurately internalize the true cost of transportation and goods movement in our society by ensuring greater protection for vulnerable communities
- It will incentivize technological development to further reduce and/or mitigate air toxics stemming from on-road mobile emission sources

It is simply immoral and unjust to continue to allow communities of color and low-income communities to be disproportionately burdened from diesel pollution. As scientific understanding of the harms of diesel evolves, so too should our health-based standard. OPAL endorses HB 3310 with a DO PASS position.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jonathan S. Ostar
Jonathan Ostar, Executive Director