



April 1, 2015
Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
RE: Testimony in support of SB 824

Neighbors for Clean Air was founded by Oregon parents and communities who seek to protect their children from dangerous air toxics that are not adequately regulated by federal or state laws. In fact, diesel emissions alone are responsible for 460 deaths a year in our state, and that costs Oregonians \$3.5 billion dollars every year due to lost work, hospitalization and other treatments. But unlike water pollution in our state, despite the risk, air pollution for the most part is 100% legal in Oregon. So most often, communities have achieved the best outcomes through direct negotiations with sources of air pollution who voluntarily commit to pollution reduction through good neighbor agreements.

While I am proud of our successes, like the GNA we negotiated with ESCO, and the current negotiations underway with Vigor and Intel, this system, that puts all the responsibility on private citizens and communities to ensure achievement of true health based standards for air pollution, is deeply flawed, and inherently unfair. There is no better example for this than when the most significant risk is posed by diesel exhaust. DEQ data says that diesel exhaust is emitted from heavy duty trucks, construction equipment, marine vessels and train engines. Its ubiquitous presence as the engine of our economy make it impossible for individuals to mitigate the exposures on their own. And a recent analysis by Multnomah County Health Department, says that too often, in fact 2-3 times more often, the neighborhoods that are most impacted are made up of communities of color. And we know that these same populations, most often African Americans and Latinos, suffer disproportionately from the negative health outcomes most associated with diesel exhaust: asthma, heart disease and cancer.

As Oregonians, we like to think we have clean air, yet Oregon is currently the sixth worst state in the nation for diesel pollution today. And without action from our state legislature right now, Oregon's problem will not just not get better, but stands to get significantly worse, as more and more engines outlawed in California make their way into our state.

This urgency is why Neighbors for Clean Air, joined by Children's First for Oregon, Oregon Pediatrics Association, the Oregon Public Health Association, and Opal Environmental Justice are among the dozen other public health, social justice and environmental organizations to urge our state to pass meaningful legislation to address the most dangerous risks of diesel exhaust. SB 824 is a significant move in the right direction, first by signaling that cheap dirty diesel engines will not be a good investment for Oregon businesses, and by beginning to build the revenue reserves through modest

public investment needed to assist individual contractors to clean up their equipment. Oregon needs to take action today and SB 824 is the right thing to do. Please move this forward.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Mary Peveto
President, Neighbors for Clean Air.