

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Testimony in Support of SB 824
April 1st, 2015

Chair Edwards and members of the committee:

The Coalition of Local Health Officials represents the 34 Local Health Departments in Oregon. Oregon's local health departments work diligently to protect the public and prevent death and disease. Our health departments are concerned about the health impacts diesel emissions have on our communities, and it is for this reason that the Coalition of Local Health Officials support SB 824, requiring the retrofitting of old diesel engines to reduce toxic emissions.

Oregon's diesel emissions rank the 6th highest in the country. The emissions released from older diesel engines release small particulate matter into our air that contain toxic agents, and when breathed in put human health at risk. Diesel emissions cause asthma, and other deadly diseases such as cancer and heart disease.

Diesel emissions account for 468 deaths each year, and their health impacts cost Oregonians \$3.5 billion annually. Oregon's communities of color are disproportionately impacted by diesel emissions, often living in areas that have 2-3 times higher diesel exposure.

It is imperative to the health and well-being of Oregon communities that we act to reduce toxic diesel emissions by:

- adopting diesel emission standards and;
- requiring that non-road diesel engines are registered with the Department of Environmental Quality;
- requiring older diesel engines to be retrofitted, reducing toxic emissions by 95%

The Coalition of Local Health Officials would like to thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns related to diesel emissions and would urge to support this important public health issue.