



**Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Testimony in Support of SB 1008**

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Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony in support of SB 1008 on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association. With 15,000 members working in nearly every healthcare setting throughout the state, ONA is committed to helping advance measures that increase air quality in our communities and serve to enhance overall patient health.

As our state's health care system continues to shift focus toward more preventative health strategies and upstream factors that impact outcomes, smart solutions that address our air pollutants must also be considered as a fundamental component of this approach. In Oregon, 81,500 children suffer from asthma and 251,000 people experience heart disease. Nurses play a vital role in helping patients manage these conditions, but exposure to diesel pollution has been shown to be a key trigger that further exacerbates these illnesses.<sup>1, 2</sup>

While self-management and lifestyle intervention are critical to reducing the burden of both asthma and heart disease, the EPA finds that 145 non-fatal heart attacks in Oregon are attributed directly to diesel exhaust each year, resulting in \$5.6 million in annual hospitalization costs.<sup>3</sup> Relatedly, heart disease and stroke are among the most costly conditions to Oregonians. In 2011, the average cost hospital cost for a heart attack was \$39,000.<sup>4</sup> This does not account for the correlated costs of restricted activity, heightened ongoing care needs or loss of employment productivity. In short, our health care system can experience a significant savings if these conditions are better prevented, and curbing diesel exposure is crucial to achieving this.

SB 1008 represents a thoughtful approach to help speed the retirement of outdated dirty heavy duty engines in our stat. Decreasing diesel particulate pollution \$17 in human health benefits per dollar invested in cleaner on-road diesel.<sup>5</sup> That kind of investment return makes this a worthy policy to embrace with regard to improving community health outcomes and reducing overall health care costs for our state.

Oregon's nurses are essential to delivering quality patient care and maintaining our public health. However, realizing the goal of successful outcomes is greatly impeded when key determinants of health, including improved our air quality, are not meaningfully addressed.

For these reasons, ONA urges your support for SB 1008. Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> American Lung Association State of the Air Report 2016 <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/city-rankings/states/oregon/>

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention section. Chronic diseases among adults, Oregon 2010-2015.

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/ChronicDisease/DataReports/Pages/AdultData.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup>[https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/ChronicDisease/Documents/OHA8582\\_AllVolumes.pdf](https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/ChronicDisease/Documents/OHA8582_AllVolumes.pdf).

<sup>4</sup>[http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/ChronicDisease/Documents/OHA8582\\_AllVolumes.pdf](http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/ChronicDisease/Documents/OHA8582_AllVolumes.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Recommendations for Reducing Emissions from the Legacy Diesel Fleet Draft Interim Report of the Clean Diesel and Retrofit Work Group Presented to the Mobile Source Technical Review Subcommittee October 7, 2005; <https://www.westcoastcollaborative.org/files/meetings/2005-12-13/FinalRWG-Report.pdf>