

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

Interchurch Center, Suite B ■ 0245 SW Bancroft Street ■ Portland, Oregon 97239
phone (503) 221-1054 ■ *fax* (503) 223-7007 ■ *Web site* www.emoregon.org

May 19, 2017

Dear Chair Burdick, Vice-Chair Ferrioli and Members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

The Board of Directors of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon supports an amendment to SB 1008 that will help meet our state's health benchmarks and reduce pollution. Most importantly, the EMO board strongly encourages legislators to adopt a strict timeline to remove pre-2007 engines from Oregon fleets. Additionally, EMO encourages the establishment of "no idle" zones near schools, hospitals, care centers and day care centers.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon works to eliminate environmental injustice and to heal and protect creation for future generations. As a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners, we see this work as central to improving the lives of Oregonians, now and in the future.

The unmitigated and widespread effects of diesel pollution question our commitment to social and racial justice. Often located on the fringes of urban areas, low-income communities and communities of color receive more exposure to all sources of air toxics¹ and are two to three times more likely to be exposed to diesel particulate matter.² Both asthma and heart disease are more prevalent in low-income households of Oregon.³ We are further burdening already vulnerable communities with increased risks to their livelihood and wellbeing.

In Oregon, diesel pollution is the sole source of one of Oregon's worst toxic air pollutants, and can contain cadmium, arsenic, benzene, formaldehyde and chromium compounds. Our communities are calling for a firm timeline to retire or retrofit the dirtiest diesel engines, otherwise we will continue to lose lives and pay the high cost of chronic disease attributed to diesel pollution.

Lagging behind our West Coast neighbors, Oregonians are experiencing the effects of an insufficient commitment to confront threats to our health and environment. Diesel pollution puts 90% of Oregonians at risk of cancer, and damage to the heart, lungs and brain, burdening Oregon with up to \$3.5 billion a year in health costs and lost productivity.⁴

All Oregonians deserve access to clean air. We urge you, our lawmakers, to affirm the universal vision for a safer and healthier future for Oregonians by seeking to drastically reduce diesel emissions.

Sincerely,

Britt Conroy
Public Policy Director, EMO

¹ Portland Air Toxics Solutions Committee Report and Recommendations, April 2012, Chapter 8
<http://www.deq.state.or.us/air/aq/planning/report/8environmentalJustice.pdf>

² Multnomah County Testimony, Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, March 32 2015
<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2015R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/58250>

³ Oregon Department of Human Services; Public Health Division July 2007; Keeping Oregonians Healthy: Preventing Chronic Diseases by Reducing Tobacco Use, Improving Diet, and Promoting Physical Activity and Preventive Screenings;
public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/ChronicDisease/Documents/healthor.pdf

⁴ <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/dembrow/workgroupitems/5-27%20OEC%20Dirt%20on%20Diesel%20Report%202016.pdf>