

House Health Care Committee
February 9, 2018
CLHO Supports HB 4003

My name is Morgan Cowling and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO). I work with and on behalf of the 34 local public health departments in Oregon who work every day to protect and promote health within communities across Oregon. CLHO urges the support of HB 4003 because it protects public health by setting deadlines for cleaning up dirty diesel engines.

Public Health Modernization aims to assure that all Oregonians have the same public health protections and identifies environmental health as a major programmatic public health area. Starting in 2007-08, Congress required newly manufactured trucks to be clean diesel. These clean diesel trucks reduce emissions by over 90%. Of all the diesel trucks that operate mainly in Oregon, only 35% are the newer cleaner diesel engines. HB 4003 establishes a timeline to ensure that we are on track to phase out the older diesel engines with the newer ones, which will help all Oregonians have the opportunity to live in healthy environmental conditions.

HB 4003 also helps Oregon tracking of nonroad diesel engines as well as allows local governments to enact ordinances that regulate diesel vehicle idling. According to the County Health Rankings, the environment is responsible for 10% of our health. By strengthening these regulations around diesel, public health will see great improvements. Exposure to diesel exhaust is serious and causes cancer; increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, and cardiovascular disease; exacerbates asthma; and can lead to low-weight and preterm births. Early-life exposure to diesel pollution can create changes in the brain that raise the risk of neurological disease later in life. Research has also shown that children who live within 500 meters of a major roadway show substantial lung deficits— exposure to air pollution is the number one cause of child hospitalization, child chronic health condition, and chronic illness causing school absences. Diesel pollution puts 90% of people in Oregon at risk for cancer and causes up to 460 premature deaths in each year. HB 4003 will save both costs and the lives of Oregonians.

Addressing diesel pollution is not only a health issue, but an equity issue as well. People in lower-income and non-white communities are more likely to be exposed to diesel exhaust pollution; a 2014 County report found diesel pollution to be 2 to 3 times worse in communities of color than in white communities.



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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Oregon is falling behind in protecting everyone in our state from deadly diesel pollution. If we do nothing, Oregonians will continue to have diminished health from diesel pollution for decades.

The Coalition of Local Health Officials urges your support of HB 4003.

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