

**Testimony of Randy Tucker, Legislative Affairs Manager
In Support of House Bill 2007
House Committee on Energy and Environment
March 19, 2019**



Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

Given the harmful impacts of diesel emissions and their disproportionate impact on vulnerable and marginalized populations within our region, Metro strongly supports HB 2007 to reduce diesel emissions through both regulatory and fiscal measures.

The health and environmental effects of diesel emissions have been the subject of extensive research throughout the world. Health experts have concluded that diesel exhaust is a known human carcinogen at exposure levels seen in many parts of Oregon, and specifically in the region Metro serves. These levels of exposure can also lead to increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, especially in young children, the elderly, and marginalized communities, including communities of color. Diesel exhaust also contains black carbon, a potent contributor to climate change.

Protecting these vulnerable populations is a critical priority for the Metro Council. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality estimates the annual health and environmental impacts in Oregon associated with highway, non-road, marine and locomotive diesel vehicles to be as high as 460 premature deaths per year with annual costs from exposure at \$3.5 billion.¹ While U.S. emissions standards for diesel engines have been tightened dramatically over the last 20 years, these engines have a long life; based on the projected rate of turnover to new engines, the benefits from these tighter standards will not be fully realized within Oregon for many years.

Reducing greenhouse gas and diesel particulate emissions is a goal of Metro's Regional Waste Plan and Regional Transportation Plan. Our Climate Smart Strategy also looks to reduce air toxics including diesel emissions. Metro has undertaken multiple efforts to reduce diesel emissions from the solid waste system, including: requiring trucks with best available emission technology for long-hauling the region's garbage; retrofitting garbage trucks with emission controls in the Portland metropolitan area; and developing clean air construction contract specifications with other governments in our region.

Metro remains committed to reducing diesel emissions and to continuing our support for diesel reduction programs. Metro has been actively engaged in legislative discussions on diesel emissions reduction dating back to the 2015 session and the 2017 Diesel Work Group led by Sen. Michael Dembrow.

Provisions of HB 2007 we support include:

- Adoption of diesel engine emission standards for medium-duty and heavy-duty trucks and buses. (Metro would support adoption of these standards as early as practicable.)

- Making Volkswagen settlement funds available to replace older diesel engines that are either on-road (e.g., trucks) or non-road (e.g., construction equipment). We also support the preferences outlined in the bill for projects such as those benefiting sensitive populations or areas with elevated diesel emissions.
- Appointment of a task force to find additional public funding to support businesses in their efforts to reduce diesel emission.
- Repealing state preemption of local regulation of idling of primary engines in commercial vehicles.

In conclusion, Metro believes HB 2007 supports:

- The Portland region's desire for equitable outcomes related to successful communities, including clean air and water and that the region is a leader in minimizing contributions to climate change.
- Implementation of the region's 2014 Climate Smart Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan.
- Improving the sustainability of our regional solid waste system by reducing the impact of garbage and recycling vehicles.

Thank you for considering these comments. We urge you to move HB 2007 forward.

ⁱ <http://www.deq.state.or.us/aq/diesel/docs/DieselEffectsReport.pdf>