



March 19, 2019

TO: House Energy & Environment Committee
RE: HB2007
FR: Mary Peveto, President, Neighbors for Clean Air

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today with the hope and optimism that HB2007, once amended, will be the vehicle to achieve substantial reductions in diesel pollution in our state.

You've already heard about the prevalence, health consequences, and disparities caused by Oregon's diesel pollution. Let's talk about timing. 13 years after this same body set a goal to reduce risk from diesel, how much additional time we will allow until older diesel engines are retired and gone from our roads? Should the schedule be set for the ongoing convenience of owners of outdated fleets ~or~ should it reflect the deficit of policy that has allowed this problem to not only fester but grow and set a course that re-establishes Oregon among its west coast peers as environmental leaders?

In January 2019 a study published by the National Bureau of Economic Research demonstrates the cost Oregon has been paying each year it failed to act on reducing diesel pollution from our roads: Air pollution from cars and trucks imposes a significant cognitive cost on young learners. It found that students attending schools located near and downwind from busy highways – areas we know characterized by high diesel emissions - had lower rates of academic performance, higher absenteeism and higher rates of disciplinary problems than those attending less polluted schools. The more traffic on nearby roads, the larger the decline in scores on state standardized tests.¹

There are at least 10 PPS schools situated dangerously close to highways and high traffic corridors, a portion of the 27 Portland Metro area² child focused schools, institutions and daycares similarly situated in danger zones.

But there is another timing issue: the climate. Climate Scientists have said we have potentially only 11 years left to take action. No one knows this better than our children who just last week left school to underscore the urgency to take bold action today. Diesel Pollution is part of class of pollution known as black carbon, and has between 2,500 - 3,000 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide³. The UN's IPCC Emissions Gap Report in which climate scientists make it clear we are not as far along on CO2 reductions as need be called for urgent action on the short lived climate forcers like black carbon.⁴

¹ <https://www.nber.org/papers/w25489>

² <https://files.constantcontact.com/bd123c2e001/9d7a8b83-6802-4b1b-930a-397376a16e08.pdf>

³ <https://www.who.int/sustainable-development/transport/health-risks/climate-impacts/en/>

⁴ <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2018>



By the time Oregon DEQ convened the Portland Air Toxics Solutions advisory committee in 2009, we knew diesel pollution exposure was wide and ubiquitous around the Portland Metro Region and it would take an 86% reduction to meet the 1 in a million goal⁵.

Is that even possible? Again we look to our neighbors in the south, where efforts to curb diesel pollution have been underway for nearly a decade. Results? The Port of Los Angeles saw diesel emissions fall 87 percent between 2005 and 2017⁶. The Port of Long Beach: 88 percent decline over the same time period. Between 2009 and 2013- a scant four years, the fraction of trucks at the Port of Oakland equipped with a diesel particle filter increased from 2 to 99 percent, and the median engine age fell from 11 to 6 years. During the same period, the average black carbon emission rate decreased by 76 percent. Total diesel emissions at the Port have been reduced by 81%.⁷

Meanwhile it should be noted: California, which represents 12% of total US population, accounted for an outsized 17 percent of job growth in the United States from 2012 to 2016. The economic study specifically called out the strength of economic growth at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.⁸

Based on those numbers, the cost economists attribute to our lack of action in the face of our children's long term potential, the urgency of the climate crisis, the long history of the work on this issue in our state (which I argue was fully participated in by all stakeholders and should be considered in the calculus of a fair "runway" on this issue⁹) and the lack of evidence for negative economic consequences, the time to act is now. There is no argument for letting diesel trucks with older than 2010 engine standard to continue to roll on Oregon roads and highways past 2023.

This not only put Oregon in line with California's health standards, it will help eliminate dumping; additionally, Oregon should work to adopt a non-road sticker program to support efforts to establish clean diesel contracting guidelines, and send a clear message that trojan horse "glider" trucks are not welcome on Oregon's roads.

We stand at a critical juncture to take the bold and decisive action to make HB2007 a meaningful remedy against an urgent problem. How much more time of our children's lives should we have to sacrifice?

⁵ <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/15pollutantsAboveSummary.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.presstelegram.com/2018/08/23/los-angeles-long-beach-ports-say-emissions-keep-falling-even-as-cargo-skyrockets/>

⁷ <https://www.portoakland.com/seaport/port-oakland-diesel-emissions-81-percent-2020-goal-reach/>

⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/05/us/california-today-how-california-helps-the-us-economy.html>

⁹ <https://orsolutions.org/osproject/north-portland-diesel-emissions-reduction>