

# OREGON COALITION OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

March 19, 2019

House Committee on Energy and Environment

Testimony in Support of HB 2007

My name is Morgan Cowling and I am the Executive Director for the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO). I work with and on behalf of the 33 local public health authorities in Oregon who work every day to prevent the spread of disease, protect the public's health, and promote health. CLHO supports HB 2007, and urges the committee to take action on this important bill.

The Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials supports this bill because it will build a healthier future for Oregon by setting deadlines for cleaning up diesel pollution that is linked to cancer, heart attack, stroke, asthma, and premature and low-birthweight births.

Diesel exhaust comes from multiple sources including trucks and school buses, and is made up of fine sooty particles and more than 40 hazardous substances that babies and children are particularly vulnerable to. In 19 Counties across Oregon diesel pollution exceeds the state's health benchmarks. Research shows that the first 1000 days of a child's life are the most important, and early-life exposure to diesel pollution can create changes in the brain that raise the risk of neurological disease later in life. Research also shows 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 conditions, and chronic illness causing school absences.

Furthermore, addressing diesel pollution is not only a health issue, but also an issue of health equity. Lower income communities and communities of color are more likely to be exposed to diesel exhaust pollution, and in Oregon, both asthma and heart disease are more prevalent in low-income households.

Oregon is falling behind in protecting everyone in our state from deadly diesel pollution. Diesel pollution puts 90 percent of people in Oregon at risk for cancer and causes up to 460 premature deaths in each year. If we don't create deadlines to clean up diesel, Oregonians will continue to have diminished health from diesel pollution for decades.

The Coalition of Local Health Officials urges your support of HB 2007.

Electronically submitted.

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Executive Director



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