



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
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February 12, 2020

Senator Kathleen Taylor
Representative Jeff Reardon
Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street, NE, Salem OR 97301

Co-Chair Taylor, Co-Chair Reardon, and Members of the Committee,

A well-supported and functioning Vehicle Inspection Program (VIP) is an essential, cost-effective tool for cleaner air, reducing greenhouse gases, and protecting the health of our communities. The City of Portland supports the approval of a fee increase for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) VIP.

Transportation-related emissions are major air pollution and greenhouse gas sources in Portland. DEQ recently conducted a VIP cost effectiveness report and analysis. The report found that the VIP program provides a 20% decrease of transportation-related emissions. Modern cars are designed to run cleaner, but only if maintained. The VIP program ensures maintenance of vehicle pollution control systems.

Portland ozone trends along with ozone trends in the Willamette Valley (Eugene and Salem) have been increasing since 2015. Ozone forms through a reaction of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Motor vehicle emissions account for most NOX emissions in the Portland-metro area and are also a large contributor of VOCs. A nonattainment designation of the ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) would have public health and economic consequences across the region. An inefficient or reduced VIP program would constrain our ability to reduce ozone.

Reducing the ability to mitigate transportation-related emissions would disproportionately burden environmental justice communities. A DEQ overlay of the Portland Air Toxics (PATs) on-road pollution and population data found uneven and increased health risks for non-white populations in Portland.

In other states, there has been outside pressure to decentralize or privatize VIPs. A DEQ analysis found that decentralized VIPs have a weighted-average fee of \$59.34 while programs that have remained centralized have a weighted-average fee of \$18.05.

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A fee increase will help ensure continued efficiencies and participation. Measurements of customer satisfaction have positive results. DEQ received over 10,000 comment cards in 2018 and had a 97% customer satisfaction rate. However, current fee intake is not enough to cover existing operations. Increased wait times, lack of options for testing facilities and the ease of getting your car tested at the same time as picking up your registration stickers would hamper performance. Decreased satisfaction could result in decreased support for this important emissions reduction strategy.

Running an efficient and innovative program is key to an effective program. The VIP program fee has not increased for 20 years, not even adjusted for inflation or population growth. The VIP program is a robust tool for reducing vehicle emissions and protecting health. The City of Portland supports SB 5702 to approve a fee increase for the DEQ VIP program.

Sincerely,
Andrea Durbin, Director
Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
City of Portland

