



March 4, 2021

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Akashdeep Singh and I am the Policy and Advocacy Manager at OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon. It is my honor and pleasure to write in support of HB 2814, which directs the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) to develop rules for indirect sources of diesel particulate matter sources.

Diesel particulate matter poses significant hazards to the pulmonary, cardiovascular, and neurological health of Oregonians. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Oregon's diesel emissions are responsible for approximately 400 premature deaths, 140 non-fatal heart attacks, 25,000 lost work days, and \$3 billion in public health costs.

Heavy duty trucks account for less than half of diesel emissions in Oregon. Non-road equipment that use diesel engines account for almost a third of total diesel emissions across the state and nearly two-thirds in the Portland metro region alone. In essence, Oregonians do not have adequate protections from the majority of diesel emissions that affect their lived environments on a daily basis.

Oregonians of Color breathe a disproportionate amount of diesel pollution in neighborhoods where we live. Our communities experience air pollution that is twenty times higher than state health benchmarks. This has tangible consequences for us: making our lived environment more generally polluted, creating and exacerbating intergenerational trauma, and public health consequences (which in and of themselves are aggravated in a respiratory pandemic).

HB 2814 establishes that the EQC would direct the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to develop a permitting program and fee structure to address indirect sources. HB 2814 also requires indirect sources to estimate and quantify construction and operational emissions and to report on emissions and notify affected residents and businesses.

Oregon has a reputation for being a leader on the environment but with HB 2814, we have the opportunity to be a trailblazer. Scientists have noted that the active mitigation of diesel pollution, a form of black carbon, from indirect sources has the potential to be an absolute game-changer when it comes to adapting to and mitigating the consequences of climate change. Because black carbon has a much shorter shelf life than carbon dioxide, reducing its output into the atmosphere has much more immediate global and local benefits.

When we think of climate and black carbon, the local impacts and consequences can often go unnoticed in the conversation. It is valuable that HB 2814 could set a national precedent for how we tackle climate change, that is undeniable. But it is also valuable that we as public advocates understand the benefits underrepresented Oregonians across the state could reap from such an effort.

HB 2814 is a critical step forward for an Oregon where communities can wake up in the morning and not cough because of the heavy industrial truck traffic outside of their homes; where communities don't have to suffer from the health and financial burdens of exacerbated health problems caused by diesel pollution; where children in underrepresented communities can play outside without the fear of their lung development being impaired.

HB 2814 is a chance to help build that future where Oregonians in urban, rural, and communities in between can breathe, live, and thrive. I urge you to breathe with underrepresented Oregonians and vote yes on HB 2814.

Sincerely,

Akashdeep Singh

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