

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Re: HB 3119

January 30, 2025

Dear Chair Lively and members of the Commission,

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility (Oregon PSR) is an organization of over 2,000 health professionals and public health advocates working to address the gravest threats to human health and survival. Oregon PSR respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to HB 3119.

As elected officials, your constituents have put their trust in you to act in their best interest. HB 3119 is in direct conflict with that interest, particularly as it pertains to the health of individuals and their communities. Delaying the Advanced Clean Truck (ACT) Rule would be detrimental to the health of Oregonians and cause increased health costs, impacting overburdened communities, including children, the elderly, and low-income families, the most.

Diesel emissions, which include fine particulate matter, black carbon, and volatile organic compounds, are associated with increased illness and death from lung, heart, and vascular disease as well as developmental and cognitive disturbances.<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that diesel engine exhaust is responsible for 176 premature deaths, 25,910 lost workdays, and \$3.5 billion in costs annually to the state of Oregon.<sup>2</sup>

Children are especially vulnerable to the negative health effects of diesel particulate pollution because their lungs are still in the developmental phase, and they breathe, on average, 50 percent more air per pound of body weight than adults. Diesel pollution contributes to a number of neurodevelopmental disorders in children, including ADHD and decreased memory and language abilities, while older adults face higher rates of dementia and Parkinson's disease.<sup>3,4,5</sup> Moreover, black carbon from diesel emissions exacerbates asthma in children and increases the severity of emphysema, COPD, and pneumonia. Black carbon increases

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<sup>1</sup>California Air Resources Board. *Overview: Diesel Exhaust & Health*.  
<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/overview-diesel-exhaust-and-health>.

<sup>2</sup>Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. *Health Effects of Diesel Exhaust*.  
<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/aq/programs/pages/diesel-health-effects.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup>Perera, Frederica P et al. "Prenatal polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) exposure and child behavior at age 6-7 years." *Environmental health perspectives* vol. 120,6 (2012): 921-6. doi:10.1289/ehp.1104315

<sup>4</sup>Oudin, Anna et al. "Traffic-Related Air Pollution and Dementia Incidence in Northern Sweden: A Longitudinal Study." *Environmental health perspectives* vol. 124,3 (2016): 306-12. doi:10.1289/ehp.1408322

<sup>5</sup>Power, Melinda C et al. "Traffic-related air pollution and cognitive function in a cohort of older men." *Environmental health perspectives* vol. 119,5 (2011): 682-7. doi:10.1289/ehp.1002767



miscarriages, low birth weight in babies, infertility, and other health concerns related to pregnancy.<sup>6</sup>

For these reasons, Oregon cannot fall behind again. When we failed to keep up with the vehicle emission standards of our neighboring state, Oregon became a dumping ground for California's polluting trucks. Multnomah County is among the worst counties in the nation for exposure to airborne diesel exhaust, and about 90% of Oregonians today live where diesel exhaust exceeds health benchmarks.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, when diesel emissions are reduced, we see a number of positive health outcomes, including significant decreases in heart attacks and fewer new cases of heart failure, and decreases in pulmonary disease and lung cancer mortality. It has been estimated that by 2030, if most of the heavy-duty trucks are operating with lower-emitting engines, 8,300 premature deaths, more than 9,500 hospitalizations, and 1.5 million workdays lost per year would be avoided.<sup>8</sup>

To save all of these lives, you must act now and oppose HB 3119. With each year that we do not take action, we lose lives that could have been spared and allow for the health of Oregonians to suffer unnecessarily.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Samantha Hernandez

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<sup>6</sup>Frutos, Víctor, et al. "Impact of Air Pollution on Fertility: A Systematic Review." *Gynecol Endocrinol*, vol. 31, no. 1, Jan. 2015, pp. 7–13, <https://doi.org/10.3109/09513590.2014.958992>. PubMed, 25212280.

<sup>7</sup>Environmental Protection Agency. *2019 AirToxScreen: Assessment Results*. <https://www.epa.gov/AirToxScreen/2019-airtoxscreen-assessment-results>.

<sup>8</sup>Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. *The Concerns about Diesel Engine Exhaust*. Feb. 2015, <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/DieselEffectsReport.pdf>.

