



Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce
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To Members of House Committee on Climate, Energy & Environment,

The Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce, on behalf businesses we represent across rural Marion and Linn counties, unequivocally supports HB 3119, which would delay the Oregon DEQ/s “Advanced Clean Trucks” rule until 2027. Diesel technology is the backbone of numerous critical industries that define our state, including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, forestry, utilities, fire districts, trucking and many others. These sectors cannot function without the reliability and power that diesel engines provide. While we recognize the importance of addressing environmental concerns, the sweeping push to eliminate diesel-fueled vehicles is both premature and detrimental, posing severe risks to our economy, infrastructure, and arguably, the lives of all Oregonians.

Lack of Electric Counterparts

At present, there are no mass-produced electric counterparts capable of meeting the demands of industries reliant on diesel-powered equipment. Vehicles such as Ford F-250s, Ram 2500s, and heavy-duty trucks essential for farming, logging, and construction lack viable electric alternatives that can deliver comparable power, range, and reliability. Additionally, existing electric vehicles are cost-prohibitive for most small businesses, family farms, and independent contractors. Without accessible and affordable options, mandating a transition away from diesel effectively cripples these industries.

Economic Impact

The elimination of diesel vehicles would have far-reaching economic consequences. Agriculture, construction, and forestry—cornerstones of Oregon’s economy—would face increased costs and logistical challenges, potentially driving smaller operators out of business. Local vehicle dealerships specializing in diesel trucks would see significant declines in sales, affecting jobs and revenue streams. The ripple effect on related industries, from equipment repair shops to logistics companies, would further strain our state’s economy.

Electric Grid Limitations

An accelerated transition to electric vehicles raises serious concerns about the capacity of Oregon's power grid. Recent growth in artificial intelligence technologies and large technology centers has already placed unprecedented demands on electricity infrastructure. Adding the widespread charging needs of heavy-duty electric vehicles could overwhelm the grid, leading to higher energy costs and reduced reliability for businesses and residents alike. Without a comprehensive plan to address these infrastructure challenges, the move away from diesel is premature and potentially harmful.

Environmental Considerations

While reducing emissions is a critical goal, it is important to acknowledge the environmental footprint of electric vehicle production. Mining for rare earth minerals required for batteries has significant ecological and social impacts. Furthermore, the disposal of spent batteries poses a long-term environmental challenge. Diesel technology, on the other hand, continues to evolve, with advancements in emissions reduction and fuel efficiency offering a more balanced approach to sustainability.

Conclusion

We urge legislators to carefully evaluate the broader implications of phasing out diesel-fueled vehicles, and support HB3119. This approach that supports innovation while maintaining the viability of essential industries.

1. Continuing to allow the sale and use of diesel vehicles until equivalent affordable and effective alternatives are widely available.
2. Investing in infrastructure improvements to support a sustainable and resilient electric grid.
3. Encouraging research and development of advanced diesel and hybrid technologies as part of a diversified energy strategy.

The Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce remains committed to fostering economic growth and sustainability of our local communities. We stand ready to collaborate on solutions that balance environmental responsibility with the needs of Oregon's businesses and workers.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this critical issue.

Sincerely, 

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