



April 19, 2017

The Honorable Ricardo Lara
California State Senate, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 563 (Lara) – California Woodsmoke Reduction Program - Support

Dear Senator Lara:

On behalf of the undersigned health and medical organizations, we are writing to express our support for Senate Bill 563 (SB 563, Lara) which would create the California Woodsmoke Reduction program. This bill would advance local air pollution reduction goals while also reducing black carbon, a potent short-lived climate pollutant.

California is home to some of the most difficult air pollution challenges in the United States, a condition made more complex due to climate change impacts. In particular, localized particle pollution from wood burning is a major source of harm for the millions of Californians burdened by asthma, COPD, heart disease and other health conditions. Children are at significant risk due to particle pollution, including in the form of preterm births and underdeveloped lungs. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has estimated that particle pollution causes over 7,000 deaths per year in our state. Increasing climate change impacts such as wildfires, droughts and extreme heat make reducing particle pollution an even greater challenge, and a greater priority.

Senate Bill 563 would establish the California Woodsmoke Reduction program at CARB to achieve health and climate benefits of cleaning up particle pollution from residential wood burning. Under SB 563, the State Air Board would work with local air districts to provide consumer incentives via the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund and other sources to replace old, uncertified wood-burning stoves with cleaner, healthier and more energy-efficient alternatives (e.g. heat pumps and solar, electric, and natural gas heaters). Doing so would reduce harmful localized smoke as well as climate-forcing black carbon pollution and provide multiple health benefits in rural and urban communities alike through reductions in fine particle pollution.

Senate Bill 563 represents an important follow-up commitment to implementation of the landmark climate legislation, Senate Bill 1383 (Lara, 2016), that set forth reduction 2030 goals for short-lived climate pollutants including black carbon, methane and fluorinated gases.

For the multiple health and climate change benefits of reducing wood smoke pollution, the American Lung Association in California strongly supports Senate Bill 563. This source of pollution threatens the health of Californians today and for generations to come and must be addressed as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Barb Sattler, RN, DrPH, FAA, Founding Member
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environment

Bonnie Holmes-Gen
Senior Director, Air Quality and Climate Change
American Lung Association in California

California Black Health Network

Zulma Michaca, Legislative Advocate/Community Organizer
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