



October 31, 2023

Administrator Michael Regan
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
 Washington, D.C. 20004

RE: Approve California Clean Air Waivers

Dear Administrator Regan:

The undersigned California health and medical organizations urge the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to act swiftly to approve waivers for several California clean air rules. Many of our organizations engaged in the multi-year rulemaking process at the California Air Resources Board and participated in EPA's public comment process on these issues. California's pending waiver requests represent policies projected to save thousands and over \$50 billion in public health benefits. EPA must act to ensure life-saving clean air standards related to trucks, harbor craft, small off-road engines and passenger vehicles move ahead without delay.

California is home to the most difficult air pollution burdens in the United States. The Clean Air Act recognized these unique circumstances and provided the state with the authority to enact standards on mobile source emissions. The statute also requires EPA to approve waivers for state standards that are at least as protective of public health and welfare as applicable Federal standards. All of the pending waivers meet this test.

Despite decades of progress made in cleaning the air in coordination and cooperation with EPA, 98 percent of Californians live in a community impacted by unhealthy levels of ozone and/or particle pollution according to the American Lung Association's "State of the Air" 2023 report.¹ Ozone and particle pollution contribute to a wide range of negative health consequences including asthma attacks, heart attacks and stroke and premature death. These burdens fall most heavily on more vulnerable populations, including children, seniors, those living with lung and heart illness, lower-income residents and people of color.

The rules related to the pending waivers are designed to support attainment of clean air standards, reduce disparities in health burdens and reduce climate pollution. We call on EPA to follow the statute and approve the following waivers, allowing California to meet its commitments to achieving clean air standards ahead of January 2024 implementation dates for several rules. Implementation of these rules will deliver major clean air, environmental justice and health benefits:

- **Commercial Harbor Craft** standards would increasingly move harbor vessels toward cleaner and zero-emission technologies to reduce the harms of diesel exhaust on neighboring communities and reduce ozone-forming and climate-forcing pollutants. Health benefits include:
 - \$5.25 billion in public health benefits
 - 530 lives saved
 - Cancer risk reduction for approximately 10 million Southern California residents and 5 million Bay Area residents due to proposed rule²

- **Small Off-Road Engine amendments** rules require more health-protective emission standards for gasoline-powered generators and other equipment in this category while also transitioning new sales of lawn care equipment to zero-emission options. This sector is currently producing more ozone-forming pollutants than the entire light-duty vehicle fleet in California and is projected to increase emissions without these amendments. Health benefits include:
 - \$8.8 billion in public health benefits
 - Nearly 900 lives saved
 - Reductions in occupational exposures to toxic pollutants³

¹ American Lung Association. State of the Air 2023. April 2023. www.lung.org/sota

² CARB. Proposed Amendments to Commercial Harbor Craft Regulation. Appendix G: Health Analysis at pp. G-46-56, G-61-65. Sept. 2021. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2021/chc2021/appg.pdf>

³ CARB. Proposed Amendments to Small Off-Road Engine Regulations. Initial Statement of Reasons at pp ES 5-6. October 2021. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2021/sore21/isor.pdf>

- **Advanced Clean Cars II** rules would require new combustion engines to be cleaner over the coming decade, while also transitioning new passenger vehicle sales to zero-emissions by 2035. Several states have adopted this standard, and more are actively in the process to approve the rules by the end of 2024. Health benefits include:
 - \$12.9 billion in public health benefits
 - Nearly 1,300 lives saved⁴
- **Heavy-Duty Low NOx Omnibus and related Warranty** policies were adopted to require manufacturers to deliver cleaner heavy-duty trucks for sale in California. This policy would result in a 50 percent reduction in engine emissions by 2024 and a 90 percent reduction by 2027. The rule will ensure greater certainty in emission reductions in real-world driving conditions and represents a major component of the required NOx reductions to attain ozone standards. Health benefits include:
 - \$23.4 billion in public health benefits
 - 2,480 lives saved
 - Over 2,000 hospitalizations and emergency department visits avoided⁵

We applaud EPA's recent approval of the California Ocean-Going Vessels At-Berth regulation and urge EPA to approve all pending waivers without delay to ensure implementation is full and on-time, bringing relief to millions of Californians impacted by harmful pollution. We call on EPA to also provide efficient review and approval as additional waivers related to trucking fleets, locomotive operations and other topics are submitted. California's clean air leadership is critical to protecting the health of our communities and for creating opportunities for greater health protections across the nation. We appreciate your consideration of our perspectives.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
 American College of Physicians (ACP) California Services Chapter
 American Lung Association
 American Nurses Association\California
 Breathe California of the Bay Area, Golden Gate and Central Coast
 Breathe Southern California
 California Medical Association
 California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice
 California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN)
 California Thoracic Society

⁴ CARB. Advanced Clean Cars II. Final Statement of Reasons for Rulemaking, Including Summary of Comments and Agency Response. Appendix F: Updated Costs and Benefits Analysis at p. 12. August 2023.

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2022/accii/fsorappf.pdf>

⁵ CARB. Updated Informative Digest. Proposed Hearing to Consider the Proposed Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle Omnibus Regulation and Associated Amendments at p. 4. Dec. 2021.

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2020/hdomnibuslownox/uid.pdf>

Central California Asthma Collaborative
Children Now
Climate Health Now
LifeLong Medical Care
Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma
Maternal and Child Health Access
NAHN - Golden Gate Chapter (San Francisco Bay Area)
Pacifica Family Maternity Center
Physicians for Social Responsibility/Sacramento
Prevention Institute
Public Health Advocates
Regional Asthma Management & Prevention
San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility
St. John's Community Health