Please Support One of the Nation’s Most Effective Clean Air Programs

When it comes to improving air quality for communities across the country, one of the most effective strategies is to replace older heavy-duty vehicles and equipment with new and much cleaner options. That is the goal of the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) program managed by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We urge you to support continuation of the program as provided under Matsui-Long reauthorization bill (H.R. 1768) which would deliver vital air quality improvements to your constituents.

Four out of every ten Americans reside in a region with unhealthy air, according to EPA. The American Lung Association estimates that air quality for many regions around the country is not improving. DERA helps communities clean up their air by replacing older trucks, buses, and equipment with newer, cleaner technologies. Replacing just one Class 8 truck with a new model can eliminate tons of emissions. DERA also enjoys broad bipartisan support, along with support from a long list of business interests and environmental and health advocates, including those signatories below.

According the EPA’s latest report to Congress on the program issued in July of this year, since DERA’s funding was first appropriated in 2008, more than 67,000 vehicles and engines have been upgraded or replaced, delivering $19 billion in direct health benefits. Those benefits include eliminating 15,490 tons of fine particles and 427,700 tons of nitrogen oxides, a smog forming compound. That works out to just about the same emission reductions as taking more than 236 million cars off the road for a year.

The program provides just enough funding to encourage owners to make a smart investment in their purchase of cleaner and often more fuel-efficient vehicles and equipment. As a result, every $1 in public funds appropriated through the DERA program is leveraged with an additional $3 in non-federal funds, generating between $11 and $30 in public health benefits and an additional $2 in fuel savings.

While DERA has been around since 2008, there still is much to be done. Heavy-duty trucks and off-road equipment are built to last, meaning a large fleet of older and higher emitting trucks remain in service. Only four in ten trucks on the road today is equipped with technologies to achieve the latest near-zero tailpipe emissions standard set by EPA. Research shows that off-road equipment, including locomotives, are of an even older generation technology and will be in the field for decades to come. DERA provides the funding needed to incentivize the replacement of those older and higher emitting vehicles and equipment. The program is voluntary, competitive, and technology neutral, allowing funding to be used for projects, advanced locally, that provide the highest benefits for the amount of funding requested.

The Diesel Emission Reduction Act has proved to be one of the most effective tools to generate short-term air quality and health benefits for local communities across the country, but those benefits cannot be sustained without proper funding. We encourage you to support extending the authorization of this cost-effective and environmentally impactful program for an additional five years as provided for under the bill.

Sincerely,

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American Association of Port Authorities
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American Lung Association
American Trucking Associations
Associated General Contractors of America
BorgWarner Inc.
Clean Air Task Force
Cook – Illinois Corporation
Corning Incorporated
Cummins Inc.
DENSO International America, Inc.
Diesel Technology Forum
Emissions Control Technology Association
Engine Manufacturers Association
Environmental Defense Fund
Faurecia Clean Mobility
The Lion Electric Co.
Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association
Massachusetts Port Authority
NAFA Fleet Management Association
National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services
National Resources Defense Council
National School Transportation Association
NGK Automotive Ceramics USA, INC.
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Truck & Engine Manufacturers Association
Tula Technology, Inc.
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