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Testimony to the House Committee on Energy & Environment on House Bill 2007

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council supports HB 2007.

Diesel engines are great workhorses. They are durable and last a long time, but—unfortunately—older diesel engines emit toxic exhaust that compromises the health of many Oregonians. Diesel pollution in 19 counties across Oregon exceeds the state's health benchmark, contributing to cancer risk as well as heart disease and heart attacks, asthma attacks, reduced lung growth in children, birth anomalies and autism, male infertility and more.

In 2003 OEC published our first report on this critical health issue. Our report, "Dirt on Diesel," recommended policy actions to reduce Oregonian's exposure to diesel exhaust. Since then, federal regulations have cleaned up new engines, leaving the task of addressing engines that are already in use to state authorities. Oregon has taken little action to do so. Our attached updated report, published in 2016, details the lack of progress on cleaning up dirty old diesel engines. In fact, the most recent assessment from the Department of Environmental Quality shows that diesel emissions have been reduced by only 2% of what is needed to reach the state's health benchmark.

Numerous health studies make it clear that Oregon will continue to pay a high price for diesel exhaust for decades longer unless we take legislative action. Given the current fleet turnover rate, we could be suffering the consequences of dirty diesel past 2040.

Oregon has a responsibility to act as soon as possible to protect communities that are most hard hit by diesel pollution, both retiring old engines and protecting people from exposure. And if we're truly going to save lives and reduce the billions of dollars each year in health care costs, we need a state-wide solution.

In order to protect public health in a way that works for our economy, HB 2007 proposes a balance of incentives and standards which:

- Set a deadline by which all medium- and heavy-duty trucks and buses must run

- on cleaner engines, tasking the EQC with creating a specific phase-out schedule.
- Set a deadline to stop adding old dirty trucks to Oregon fleets.
 - Inspect old and new trucks to make sure they are meeting the standards for their age.
 - Use 80% clean diesel on state public construction projects over \$20 million.
 - Allow local governments to adopt idling ordinances that meet their communities' needs.
 - Distribute the remaining VW settlement funds to replace old diesel engines, starting where pollution is worst and people are most sensitive, and with preference to small fleets and disadvantaged business.
 - Launch a task force to determine a new long-term source of funding, beyond the VW settlement dollars, to support businesses in retiring old engines, as well as develop a sticker program that will make it clear whether non-road equipment is running on a clean engine or not.

HB 2007 is a strong bill, and it would be far more health-protective if it:

- Set an earlier deadline for retiring old truck and bus engines. California started the clock ticking in 2013, requiring the oldest engines to be cleaner by 2015. All of California's trucks and buses will meet 2010 model year standards by 2023. Oregon's fleet will be even older and dirtier than California's when our clock starts ticking, which demands faster action.
- Directed the EQC to start working on developing a sticker program right away, rather than waiting for task force recommendations.
- Ensured all vehicles of the same model year are held to the same standard—even if old engines are put into new truck bodies.

The imperative to clean up dirty diesel is huge: To protect people's health, to address environmental justice, and to combat climate change, Oregon needs to act on diesel this session. We simply can't wait any longer.

Thank you for your consideration. We hope you will strengthen HB 2007 and move it quickly.