

To: House Committee on Energy and Environment
Re: Comments on HB 2007
March 18, 2019

Good Afternoon Chair Helm, Vice Chair Reschke, Vice Chair Schouten, and Members of the Committee:

I am Dr. Theodora Tsongas, an environmental health scientist/epidemiologist with more than 40 years of experience evaluating the public health impacts of environmental pollutants. I am commenting today to encourage you to support HB 2007 and make it more effective with strong amendments.

Diesel pollution has grave health consequences for all Oregonians. It is impossible to avoid exposure to diesel exhaust emissions where we live and work, where we go to school and play. The adverse impacts of diesel particulates are well known and especially affect the young, the elderly, and the disadvantaged, and increase the rate of premature deaths, lung, heart, and vascular disorders, including asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease, heart attack and stroke, and developmental disorders. We can no longer support a delay in reducing the levels of these pollutants in our air. There is no safe level of exposure to diesel emissions. Period.

I am concerned about how it feels to have a chronic lung disease, as I watched a very dear friend fight for each breath for months before she died. I am concerned that we are continuing to do nothing to prevent these tragic illnesses and deaths when we know very well what impacts air pollution has.

HB 2007 can help to ameliorate these problems, but is not really enough to be protective of our public health. Therefore, I am asking that you add amendments to strengthen the bill:

1. match California's truck and bus rule deadline for 2010 model engines or equivalent by 2023. Why should we have to put up with harmful and costly pollution for 10 years when it can be done in four? The people most vulnerable to diesel emissions cannot afford to wait one year, much less four or ten. It is time to act and act effectively. No excuses.

2. Close loopholes that would interfere with compliance. Make it transparent what year a vehicle and its engine are. And make sure people know why this is important.

Thank you for your very hard work. Please make HB 2007 as strong as possible to protect our health and our lives.

Sincerely,
Theodora Tsongas, PhD, MS