

January 30, 2023

Chair Marsh, Co-Chair Levy, Co-Chair Levy, and Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and the Environment,

My name is Akash Singh and I am writing on behalf of the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), a national organization that puts science into action with the goal of contributing to an equitable, sustainable, and healthy future. UCS is proud to be supported by more than 10,000 Oregonians, including over 500 professionals who are a part of our Science Network.

I write to you today in support of HB 2714, an important step in realizing a future where Oregonians are not as dependent on fossil fuels and electric trucks are the norm and not the exception.

Rebates from the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) are not enough to drive the market for Medium and Heavy Duty Zero-Emission Vehicles (MHD ZEVs) at a pace necessary for Oregon to meet its climate and air quality goals, including the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and alleviating pollution in overburdened communities. Although the IRA is a step in the right direction, the law's limited incentives for the largest and most polluting commercial vehicles presents an opportunity for states to create supplemental incentives that will accelerate adoption of the most critical zero-emissions trucks.

HB 2714 is also an opportunity to accelerate the manufacturing of MHD ZEVs in Oregon and provide well-paying jobs to thousands of Oregonians. Daimler is already building its eCascadia Electric Class 8 tractor trucks at its Swan Island facility in Portland, which currently supports over 600 jobs (<https://www.daimlertruck.com/en/career/locations/detail/portland-or-western-star-manufacturing-plant>). There's no reason more Oregonians cannot take advantage of the benefits electric manufacturing offers.

As noted in the 2021 Oregon Clean Trucks Program assessment by ERM, the reduction of emissions from a shift towards an electric truck fleet provide "significant reductions in NOx, PM, and GHG emissions" even after taking into account emissions from the production of "electricity and hydrogen needed to power ZEVs." (https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/or-clean-trucks-report_0.pdf, pg. 12).

The emissions reductions from a transition towards electric trucks also has substantial public health benefits. Reduced emissions means a lower mortality rate from health conditions caused and or exacerbated by emissions. Reduced emissions means fewer hospital visits because of conditions caused and or exacerbated by emissions - and with the expense

associated with healthcare, that translates into a tangible health and financial benefit for Oregonians.

HB 2714 could provide additional benefits with the inclusion of the following two suggestions. Funding from this legislation should be prioritized in freight/industry-adjacent communities if possible to ensure that Oregonians hardest hit by pollution also receive some benefits from this legislation. Language directing DEQ to ensure fair distribution of funds to small businesses can help Oregonians with fewer resources take advantage of the funding provided by the legislation - this can be achieved by holding a proportional amount of the funds for small businesses for a specified amount of time during each funding cycle.

I urge you to take these considerations into account and pass HB 2714 without delay. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

Akash Singh, JD
Western States Policy Advocate
Union of Concerned Scientists