

Submitter: Akram Khan
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3119
Subject: Opposition to HB 3119

Chair Lively and Members of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and express my opposition to House Bill 3119.

My name is Akram Khan, MBBS. I am a pulmonary and critical care physician and an Associate Professor in the Division of Pulmonary, Allergy, and Critical Care Medicine at Oregon Health & Science University. While I am not speaking on behalf of my organization, I provide my credentials to support my expert opinion on this critical public health issue.

I strongly oppose HB 3119, which would repeal Oregon's critical air quality truck pollution standards, worsening air pollution and directly harming public health.

As a physician, I witness the devastating effects of diesel emissions and air pollution daily. Diesel exhaust is a known human carcinogen that contributes significantly to asthma exacerbations, lung cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and premature deaths. It also causes long-term harm, such as impaired lung function in children and adults, cognitive deficits, and pregnancy complications.

Children, in particular, are highly vulnerable to diesel exhaust due to their higher respiratory rates and developmental windows. Studies show that traffic-related air pollution not only worsens asthma but is also likely to cause asthma and impair lung function in children. Black carbon particles from diesel exhaust are detectable in children's airways and cause greater lung damage at higher concentrations. Air pollution from older diesel school buses significantly affects children's health, and replacing these buses with lower-emission alternatives has been shown to improve air quality and reduce missed school days.

The financial burden of diseases caused by air pollution is substantial. COPD and asthma, both linked to diesel pollution, cost more than \$100 billion annually in the U.S., with an estimated \$3 billion in asthma-related costs in Oregon alone. These costs, which include hospitalizations, medications, and lost productivity, disproportionately fall on taxpayers and low-income populations enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP. Inhaler costs have skyrocketed, with some treatments costing over

\$11,000 per year. Reducing diesel emissions would significantly alleviate these health and economic burdens.

The Advanced Clean Trucks rule is a critical tool for reducing toxic emissions and improving health outcomes in Oregon. Trucks built after 2007 are up to 99% cleaner, and implementing stricter emissions standards will help Oregon transition away from older, highly polluting diesel engines. By delaying these standards, HB 3119 would allow outdated, dirty diesel trucks banned in California and Washington to flood Oregon, further worsening air quality and health outcomes.

I urge you to reject HB 3119 and support a firm timeline for retiring and retrofitting older diesel engines. Oregon must prohibit pre-2007 diesel trucks from being added to our fleet and ensure emissions testing that protects the health of Oregonians, especially our most vulnerable populations.

Rolling back or delaying beneficial truck standards is a step backward for public health. I respectfully ask for a "NO" vote on HB 3119 to uphold Oregon's commitment to reducing air pollution, protecting public health, and saving healthcare costs.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,
Akram Khan, MBBS
Portland, OR