






Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council

August 17, 2010

From: Suja Lowenthal, Second District 
Gary DeLong, Third District 
Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District 

Subject: Emissions from Motor Vehicles

REQUEST:

Respectfully request the City Attorney work with the American Lung Association of California to draft a resolution in support of the State of California and the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) efforts to reduce criteria air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles while also advancing public health, air quality, the environment and the green economy in California.

Request that the resolution include support for the establishment of ambitious regional GHG reduction targets as envisioned by SB 375 that incentivize local governments to integrate land use and transportation planning that supports air quality and public health goals and emphasizes reductions in vehicle miles traveled through alternatives to driving, such as walking, biking and mass transit options.

Request that the resolution also include support for CARB's promotion of clean vehicle technologies by adopting expanded Low Emission Vehicle (LEV III) standards to reduce criteria air pollutants and greenhouse gases and to strengthen the state's Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) and Clean Fuels Outlet (CFO) infrastructure programs to protect the health of California's economy, environment and its people.

BACKGROUND:

According to the American Lung Association in California and other health sources, our state is experiencing a public health crisis due to poor air quality, with over 90% of Californians living in areas that exceed federal health-based ozone standards. Exposure to elevated levels of ozone and other pollutants such as particulate matter annually contributes to hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks and tens of thousands of hospitalizations and premature deaths due to heart and lung disease and recent research conducted by the RAND Corporation found that hospital care related to elevated pollution levels in California cost nearly \$200 million from 2005 to 2007.

Higher temperatures resulting from global warming can create conditions that are ideal for the formation of ground-level ozone, a pollutant that causes severe adverse health impacts, including asthma attacks, hospitalizations and even premature deaths; and without significant actions the State of California faces billions of dollars in public health damages. California depends on petroleum for 97 percent of its transportation needs and motor vehicles are significant emitters of ozone precursors, particulates and air toxics, and the single largest anthropogenic source of global warming causing greenhouse gas emissions in California.

California's Clean Fuels Outlet regulation is being updated to ensure that clean fueling infrastructure is sufficiently deployed to support the new vehicle market so that clean fuels like hydrogen are readily available to meet consumer demand for advanced clean vehicles. California's Clean Cars (AB 1493: Pavley, 2002), Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) and Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) programs reduce petroleum consumption, support new jobs and investments in California's emerging green economy and spur innovation in low and zero emission vehicles. The California Legislature enacted Senate Bill 375 (SB 375: Steinberg, 2008) to encourage integrated land use and transportation planning that supports air quality and public health goals and emphasizes reductions in vehicle miles traveled and GHG emissions by promoting alternatives to driving, such as practical walking, biking and mass transit options; and

California's history of national leadership is critical to protecting public health, creating a new green economy and spurring action on global warming pollution nationally. As a leader at the municipal level in areas such as clean fuel fleet operation, greening of port operations, landfill diversion and water quality, the City of Long Beach should affirm its support for our state's efforts to improve health and environmental standards.