

March 7, 2024

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
U.S. House of Representatives

RE: DC Organizations Oppose Legislation Undoing the District's Authority to Set Strong Clean Vehicle Standards

Congresswoman Norton and Members of the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability:

We, the undersigned, are organizations that work to advance the interests of the people and the environment of the District of Columbia. Collectively, our organizations work across issue areas and concerns facing District residents and represent members and communities across all of DC's wards and neighborhoods.

We write to express our strong opposition to any legislative attempts to undermine the District's authority to adopt policies and programs that protect the health and welfare of its residents and environment. This includes efforts to undermine the District's adoption and implementation of the Advanced Clean Cars II standards (ACC II), California's more stringent vehicle tailpipe pollution standards.

In adopting these standards, DC joined with 13 other states to lead the nation in safeguarding public health and reducing pollution from tailpipe emissions. We applaud the District's leadership in reducing transportation sector emissions, advancing a clean vehicle transition, and protecting public health. According to a Sierra Club analysis, by 2050, the clean cars standards in D.C. will cut light-duty vehicle emissions of nitrogen oxides by 86% and fine particulate matter by 71%, compared to 2023.¹ These emissions reductions will improve air quality and deliver health and economic benefits as the transition to zero-emission vehicles moves forward. The transition to zero-emission vehicles is already well underway.²

Action to limit the District from adopting these standards is not only contrary to Congress' explicit grant of authority to states and DC to adopt California's vehicle emission standards, but it also threatens the District's autonomy and right to govern itself and rejects the rights of District voters and their elected representatives to act in the interest of the public welfare and health.

District of Columbia residents have no less right to breathe clean air or live in a healthy environment than residents of any other state. Undoing these safeguards would perpetuate toxic air pollution that disproportionately harms communities across DC.

¹ <https://www.sierraclub.org/press-releases/2024/01/dc-moves-forward-advanced-clean-cars-ii-program>

² <https://about.bnef.com/electric-vehicle-outlook/>

Now, as we face the clear and present effects of climate change³ and experience the health impacts of transportation pollution,⁴ we ask Congress to respect the rights of District residents and uphold the District's right to govern itself and protect the health of its residents and environment.

Sincerely,

Sierra Club District of Columbia Chapter
DC Environmental Network
CCAN Action Fund
Citizens' Climate Lobby - DC
Climate Institute
Coalition for Smarter Growth
DC Chapter of National Organization for Women
DC Voters for Animals
DC Democratic State Committee
Just Economics, LLC
Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO
Neighbors United for DC Statehood
Peter Lynch, ANC 3/4G-05
Rock Creek Conservancy
The Stella Group, Ltd.
Third Act DC
Washington Area Bicyclist Association
We the People Community Health Care Workers Coalition

³ <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>

⁴ <https://blog.ucsusa.org/dave-reichmuth/air-pollution-from-cars-trucks-and-buses-in-the-u-s-everyone-is-exposed-but-the-burdens-are-not-equally-shared/>