

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

The Honorable James Comer
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Opposition to H.R.7526 - D. C. Consumer Vehicle Choice Protection Act and Any Other Legislation Undoing the District of Columbia's Authority to Set Strong Clean Vehicle Standards

Chairman Comer, Ranking Member Raskin, and Members of the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing on behalf of our millions of members and supporters to express our strong opposition to the *D.C. Consumer Vehicle Choice Protection Act* (H.R.7526) and any legislative attempts aimed at undermining the District of Columbia's authority to adopt California's more stringent vehicle tailpipe pollution standards. Such a move would unjustly infringe upon D.C.'s autonomy and its ability to enact policies that protect the health and welfare of its residents.

By curtailing D.C.'s authority in this regard, attempts to block D.C. from implementing the Advanced Clean Cars II standards (ACC II) would hinder the District's capacity to serve as a pioneer in environmental innovation. This goes against the original intent of Congress, which explicitly granted states and D.C. the power to adopt California's vehicle emission standards.

Moreover, it sets a dangerous precedent by injecting political motives into what should be scientifically grounded decisions aimed at safeguarding public health and welfare. 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 The standard would improve the unhealthy air quality in the District, especially in overburdened communities that already face unfairly high levels of environmental pollution.² The District has been in nonattainment of various federal ozone standards for the past three decades, and exposure to ground-level ozone pollution can cause lung inflammation and exacerbate diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema.³ These emissions reductions will lead to air quality, health, and economic benefits as the transition to zero-emission vehicles moves forward.

D.C. must retain the freedom to pursue environmental safeguards that are tailored to its unique needs and values, including the adoption of stringent emissions standards to combat climate change and enhance air quality for its inhabitants. It is imperative to respect the rights of D.C. voters and uphold local decision-making processes.

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

² https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/anayo_dc.html.

³

<https://www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Air-Quality/Air-Pollutants/EffectsOzone#:~:text=Breathing%20ground%2Dlevel%20ozone%20can,may%20permanently%20s car%20lung%20ti ssue.>

Rather than recognize the twin crises of unmitigated climate change⁴ and public health impacts from transportation pollution⁵ or the transition to zero-emission vehicles underway⁶, this bill aims to stem the tide of progress towards clean air and a healthy future. We need to move forward, not backward—any legislation aiming to do so should be rejected outright.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

CALSTART

Center for Biological Diversity

Climate Action Campaign

CleanAIRE NC

Coltura

Dream.Org

Earthjustice

Elders Climate Action

Electric Vehicle Association

Environmental Defense Action Fund

Environmental Protection Network

Evergreen Action

EVHybridNoire

Interfaith Power & Light

League of Conservation Voters (LCV)

Moms Clean Air Force

Natural Resources Defense Council

Public Citizen

Respiratory Health Association

Sierra Club

Southern Environmental Law Center

⁴ <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>

⁵ <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/>

⁶ <https://about.bnef.com/electric-vehicle-outlook/>