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**Breathe California Commends One Year of the Los Angeles Clean Truck Program;
Calls on Members of Congress to Take Urgent Action to Protect It**

Statement by: Enrique Chiock, President and CEO, Breathe California of Los Angeles County

“Breathe California salutes Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, the City of Los Angeles and it’s Port Commission for their bold leadership and determination to tackle the public health crisis caused by diesel port pollution and poor industry standards. On the one-year anniversary, 2,000 of the oldest polluting trucks are off the roads for good and nearly 6,000 new, environmentally-friendly trucks are now operating on our freeways. The L.A. program serves as a model for what can be accomplished in port communities around the country when forward-thinking public agencies work with local stakeholders to address 21st century challenges.

“But we cannot breathe a sigh of relief just yet – the Virginia-based American Trucking Association has staged a relentless legal assault on port truck clean-up plans that threatens to put the brakes on further clean-air gains at California ports.

“These out-of-state, industry bullies have also had a chilling effect on Oakland, as we struggle to put an effective air quality improvement plan in place at the Port. The legal roadblocks erected by these industry hired guns mean children, residents, truck drivers and other port workers will suffer from toxic emissions.

“Diesel truck pollution contains particulate matter that gets in the lungs and blood stream and has been directly linked to serious respiratory illnesses and premature death. In Oakland neighborhoods that surround the port, one in five children suffers from asthma and there is an increased cancer risk from air toxics three times higher than the Bay Area average. Old dirty trucks that move cargo leave toxic fumes in their wake of regional transportation corridors, a key factor in the region’s failure to meet federal air quality standards.

Current transportation law has allowed community residents, workers, and taxpayers to foot the bill for this toxic mess for too long. Industry must be held accountable to clean up the pollution that it created. It’s time for Congress to update the archaic law that the clean-air opponents are using to stand in the way healthy and economically vibrant port communities.”

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Beginning in 1904, Breathe California has worked to reduce the impact of lung disease through prevention, education, advocacy and patient services. Our local offices continue to fight lung disease and protect lung health through grassroots work in our local communities. We offer a wide array of quality programs and services to combat critical lung health issues such as asthma, tobacco use, emphysema, lung cancer, air pollution and tuberculosis. We strive to reach all of the diverse populations unique to our state and to help all Californians breathe easier.