



**For Immediate Release**

October 1, 2009

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Number: 201-390-0094

**Statement from Reverend Fletcher Harper, of GreenFaith, on the one-year anniversary of the Los Angeles Clean Truck Program**

“Several times each week, I drive the New Jersey Turnpike past the Ports of Newark and Elizabeth. A sulfur-yellow haze hangs over the air, and it looks awful. Because of my work as a religious-environmental leader, I know it doesn’t only look bad, it is the evidence of the pollution caused by the Ports – in part due to the environmentally, economically unjust port trucking system. This toxic air makes children, workers and residents sick, and real people do in fact die from pollution-related illness.

“One year ago, the Port of Los Angeles launched its Clean Truck Program, an innovative business model that cleans the air. The program rightly insists that port drivers should be treated as employees – not independent contractors – so trucking companies take responsibility for cleaner commerce. The program has helped replace the oldest, heavily-polluting trucks with nearly 6,000 clean-burning vehicles. The LA Clean Truck Program is clearly a win-win – for hard-working drivers, the environment, and port-adjacent communities which enjoy cleaner air.

“Protecting human health and the environment and respecting worker’s dignity are religious, moral values. The LA Clean Truck Program embodies these values. It’s the right way to operate port trucking systems, and it’s the right way to respect our communities. I’m proud to be part of the Coalition for Healthy Ports, which is working to bring a similar solution to the Ports of New York and New Jersey – the biggest, most polluting port system on the eastern seaboard.

“Unfortunately, the American Trucking Association is attempting to threaten this progress in court, citing decades-old law. Taking stock of our moral, environmental and economic obligations, GreenFaith is joining more than 100 other organizations and leaders in calling for Congress to update the law to remove any legal doubt that local port officials can address the pollution and public health crisis that plague port communities. .

“We’re working for a day when the air around the ports is clear – not dirty and yellow. We’re working for a day when the workers who deliver the goods that give us all the standard of living we enjoy can earn a decent living, a day when the residents of nearby communities have clean air to breathe instead of watching their children suffer from asthma. It’s a pleasure to join with our environmental, community, public health and labor partners around the country to celebrate the first anniversary of the LA Clean Trucks Program, and to pledge our support to see it become the norm at ports nationwide.”

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