

For Immediate Release
October 1, 2009

Contact: Amy Goldsmith
Phone: 732-895-2502

Statement from Amy Goldsmith, Executive Director of the New Jersey Environmental Federation, on the one-year anniversary of the Los Angeles Clean Truck Program

“One year ago, the City of Los Angeles and its Harbor Commission, under the leadership of Mayor Anthony Villaraigosa, implemented the Clean Trucks Program. In twelve months the Port of Los Angeles has significantly reduced the amount of deadly toxins in the air. The key to its long-term success is the requirement that capitalized trucking companies assume responsibility for fleet replacement and maintenance instead of individual drivers who average \$10 an hour.

“Like Southern California, New Jersey has earned a reputation as a highly polluted air shed. It is constantly in violation with federal Clean Air Act standards. Though there are many sources of pollution, the port trucking industry plays a significant role in the distribution of hazardous diesel pollution throughout our region which is a leading cause of preventable diseases, such as asthma and cancer, which risks the lungs and livelihoods of thousands of port truck drivers and residents in neighboring communities.

“Unfortunately, the American Trucking Association (ATA) wants the workers behind the wheel to pay the cost to clean up the pollution its companies create. Their lawsuit against the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach threaten further emissions reduction achievements and is designed to deter other major American ports from setting real operational standards to rein in pollution.

“Despite this bullying from an industry lobby that also opposes climate change legislation, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey continues to take steps to explore the link between driver economics and dirty air. We commend Executive Director Chris Ward and other top officials for sending letters to US Senator Frank Lautenberg (NJ) and US Representative Jerrold Nadler (NY) encouraging them to help ensure that decades-old law does not stand in the way of environmental progress.

“The New Jersey Environmental Federation, along with community, environmental and labor partners across the country, calls on Congress to bring our law into the 21st century. We must have a federal framework that allows local port authorities to implement market-based solutions to replicate LA’s clean-air successes on both coasts and create a level-playing field for responsible business ready to compete and grow in a green economy.”

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