



1536 W. 25th St. #214
San Pedro, CA 90732

For immediate release Oct 1, 2009
Contact, David Greene, 310-381-9899

A Resident's Call to Congress to Protect the Environmental Progress of the LA Clean Truck Program for the Long Term Statement by David Greene, President of the San Pedro Democratic Club

“The people in San Pedro can now breathe easier because of the Clean Truck Program. As a seaside bedroom community of Los Angeles, our homes and businesses border the north end of the port. The pollution from diesel trucks that move shipping containers between ships and warehouses in the region has been hard on the health of people not just in San Pedro but also for those along freight transportation corridors that extend 50 miles away.

“One week ago, the *Los Angeles Times* ran an article headlined “Carrying Cargo, Delivering Disease.” The front-page story detailed how diesel pollution generated by the port ships, trucks and trains causes asthma, heart and lung disease, and cancer. Studies have shown that 40 percent of toxic port emissions come from trucks alone, but thanks to the LA Clean Truck Program, the oldest, most polluting rigs have been banned and replaced with nearly 6,000 new and clean-burning vehicles. This great news means that pollution has and will be reduced over the near term.

But we cannot declare victory yet: It took heavy public and port subsidies to replace the fleet because “independent owner operator” truck drivers struggle to earn the federal minimum wage and cannot afford vehicle replacement. Rather than take advantage of the port’s economic incentives that come along with environmental stewardship, some industry polluters went to court to hold on to the deadly status quo. These trucking companies want to rely on public subsidies and impoverished port drivers to obtain and maintain the new trucks, jeopardizing clean air achievements over the longer term.

“The Port of Los Angeles must have the tools to fully implement their Clean Truck Program. Economists and environmentalists agree that an asset-based system – company-owned trucks driven by employees - pays for itself, keeps pollution low, and treats drivers fairly.

“By making a small change to the Federal Aviation Administration Authorization Act (FAAAA), local government gets a little more of its traditional say about what goes on in its own backyard. And the Port of Los Angeles, as a landlord, can rightfully set environmental and operational standards for how its property is used.

“As an organization that represents citizens, taxpayers and progress for San Pedro, we actively support the change to the FAAAA proposed by the Port of Los Angeles, and echoed by the Port of Oakland, and the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey which face similar environmental and economic development challenges as we do here. It will bring sustainability to environmental improvement and fairness to drivers, while reducing taxpayer subsidies.”