



MEDIA ADVISORY FOR: Thursday, March 20, 2008
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Enviros, Public Health Advocates & Port Drivers to Rally in Support of the Sustainable LA Clean Trucks Program

'High Road to Clean Air' Policy Expected to Pave Way for Green Growth

WILMINGTON – Green groups, community residents, port drivers and their families will rally behind the comprehensive emissions-reduction plan the Port of Los Angeles is anticipated to approve on Thursday.

Though some details on implementation are unclear, Colleen Callahan of the American Lung Association of California said “the LA Clean Trucks Program appears to take the high road to clean air,” as it is modeled after an innovative, sustainable business policy endorsed by a strong coalition of 30+ organizations to reduce environmental and public health risks that have stalled Port expansion since 2001. “We are ready to work with the port to achieve the highest level of alternative-fuel trucks in the nation.”

Under Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa’s leadership, the LA Port developed the proposal, which enjoys wildly popular support among residents in the harbor communities. Nearly 75 percent of voters in the region favor the model, according to polling conducted by Greenberg, Quinlan, Rosner Research, a fact visibly demonstrated by the thousands of lawn signs dotting area homes urging its passage.

WHO: Coalition for Clean & Safe Ports and community members, port drivers

WHAT: Rally and press availability in support of a strong and sustainable LA Clean Trucks Program

WHERE: Banning’s Landing Community Center, 100 E. Water Street in Wilmington

WHEN: Thur. 3/20: 8:45 gathering, 9 am commission meeting, 1:30 (approx) post-vote rally & press avail

Critical to the Port of LA’s long-term success is the provision that removes the burden for owning and operating the tools of the trade from underpaid port drivers who lack the stability or capital to purchase and maintain a new clean-technology fleet. In requiring trucking companies to act as employers to assume full responsibility for low-emission cargo vehicles, the LA program is viewed by leading independent economists as a sweeping policy that will reduce pollution by 80 percent in five years, with built-in benefits to increase operational efficiency, improve port security, enhance public safety, and reduce neighborhood congestion. On the heels of a survey that found nearly 70 percent of Californians are willing to pay higher costs for sustainable goods movement, a port analysis found the plan will only translate to 5 to 7 cents on a \$45 pair of sneakers.

Sens. Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton each endorsed the key tenets of the LA Clean Trucks plan, along with the American Lung Association of CA, Coalition for Clean Air, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, Physicians for Social Responsibility, the Teamsters union, Sierra Club Harbor Vision Task Force, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and dozens of other organizations that promote livable, sustainable communities.

Despite such broad support, last month Long Beach Port officials were suddenly directed by Mayor Bob Foster to reject the comprehensive diesel-truck replacement plan they jointly developed with their LA counterparts. Mayor Foster’s primary rationale for adopting weaker standards that disregard the economic instability of port drivers was to stave off industry litigation threats, however his political calculation quickly collapsed: the nation’s largest trucking lobby has taken legal action against Long Beach to protest the minimal new requirements.