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As Industry Polluters Seek to Kill Clean-Air Requirements in Court...
Environmental Coalition Vows to Fight for LA Port's Clean Trucks Program

Sierra Club's Harbor Vision Task Force co-chair Tom Politeo issued the following remarks after the American Trucking Association obtained a preliminary injunction against key provisions of the LA and Long Beach clean-air policies in the nation's largest port complex. The LA Clean Trucks Program is on its way to reducing diesel truck pollution by 80%, delivering \$5 billion to the regional economy, and creating stronger road safety and security enforcement.

The Port of Los Angeles initiative has been endorsed by over 100 environmental, public health, labor, community and faith organizations in LA, Long Beach, Oakland, Seattle, Newark and New York City and is necessary to help clear a pathway to job-creating future port expansion projects. Politeo is a San Pedro resident and serves on the coalition's steering committee.

"In court this week, the Virginia-based American Trucking Association proved they would rather sign a blank check to litigate against life-saving programs than help pay the cost to clean up the deadly pollution their businesses create in Southern California and in other major U.S. ports like Oakland, Seattle and Newark.

"The federal deregulation of port trucking, like that of the financial sector, has been an absolute calamity that literally chokes and congests Los Angeles and other metropolitan regions along our nation's coastlines. This upsetting ruling clearly demonstrates we cannot let 20th century laws continue to govern a key American industry in which the challenges of the 21st century – globalization and global warming – collide.

"The Los Angeles Harbor Commission, City Council, and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa did the right thing in enacting the comprehensive Clean Trucks Program. Not only have thousands of independent port truck drivers joined impacted community residents and environmentalists in petitioning for the policy to rid our roads of dirty diesel rigs, economists agree the 'concession' model is stabilizing the market, improving efficiency and helping responsible companies compete and grow at a time we need it the most.

"This broad coalition came together to end the public health crisis and an unaccountable market ideology that has allowed poverty and pollution to plague our communities for nearly three decades. Taxpayers, workers and residents deserve a strong port program that requires stable, well-capitalized companies to take full responsibility for fleet replacement and proper maintenance of a new generation of low-emission and alt-fuel vehicles. Clean-air goals cannot possibly be met by independent low-wage drivers who average \$11 an hour.

"Three people die each week from LA and Long Beach port truck pollution, but Southern California is not alone in the urgent need to clean the air from deadly diesel particulates, in large part due to port trucking:

- 87 million Americans are at heightened risk for cancer, asthma and other respiratory diseases because they live in communities adjacent to 40 of our nation's largest ports which fail to meet federal air quality standards.
- Diesel pollution from goods movement overall kills 3,700 people across California each year, more than the state's homicide rate.
- New Jerseyans face the nation's second greatest cancer risk from diesel soot in the nation. Newark's school children experience a 25 percent asthma rate, double the state and national rates, with treatment accounting for 12% of the state's managed care costs.
- One out of every five West Oakland children suffer from asthma, and port drivers face elevated cancer risks of up to 2,000 times the EPA's acceptable level based on exposure to diesel particulate matter.
- Seattle residents have long faced higher cancer risks due to poor air quality, but scientists now say a spike in dioxin levels in soils and the Duwamish River result from a constant stream of 2,000 diesel trucks driving through the area, over 60% of which are over 12 years old.

"This blue-green alliance will not stop fighting until we achieve a stable and sustainable market that no longer puts our lungs and livelihoods at risk. We will continue to explore all legal and political tools available to ensure justice for port drivers and community residents. We are confident the LA Clean Trucks Program can and will become the clean-commerce model for port trucking nationwide."

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The **Coalition for Clean & Safe Ports** is a partnership of environmental, public health, community, labor and faith organizations that promote sustainable economic development at West Coast ports. We are working to make the port trucking system a less polluting, more competitive generator of good quality jobs for harbor-area residents. The **Coalition for Healthy Ports** is the sister alliance working to create cleaner, greener ports in New York and New Jersey. Nationwide we are over 100 organizations strong, including:

Alameda County Public Health Department • Alameda Labor Council, AFL-CIO • American Lung Association of California • Asian Pacific Environmental Network • Cascade Chapter of the Sierra Club • Change to Win • Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice • Coalition for Clean Air • Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles • Coalition for a Safe Environment • Communities for a Better Environment • Communities for Clean Ports • East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy • East Bay Community Law Center • East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice • Garden State Alliance for a New Economy • GreenFaith • ILA Local 1588 • ILWU Locals 6, 10, 34, 75 • Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice • International Brotherhood of Teamsters • Ironbound Community Corporation • LA County Federation of Labor • Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma • Long Beach Community Partners Council • Long Beach Greens • Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy • National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Carson/Torrance (NAACP) • Natural Resources Defense Council • NJ Environmental Federation • NJ Environmental Justice Alliance • NJ Sierra Club • Oakland ACORN • The Pacific Institute • Physicians for Social Responsibility • San Pedro Democratic Club • SEIU • Sierra Club Harbor Vision Taskforce • Southern California Council of Laborers • UNITE HERE • Washington Blue Green Alliance • West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project • Workforce Collaborative