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## U.S. Rep. Miller Urged to Support Clean Construction Plan for MI Jobs, Health

*Alliance for Healthy Air urges Congress to approve plan that will benefit Michigan*

LANSING – Health advocacy and watchdog group **Alliance for Healthy Air** today called on U.S. Rep. Candice Miller to support clean construction proposals that would increase the use of clean-diesel vehicles and equipment on federally funded highway construction projects.

Last week, the Associated General Contractors of America and the Clean Air Task Force proposed clean construction measures that they would like introduced into federal transportation legislation that will provide funds to states for diesel pollution cleanups. The plan will designate highway monies to cover the cost of retrofitting and repowering diesel equipment, and reducing the amount of diesel pollution that a vehicle emits by up to 90%; all are steps that would improve public health in Michigan, especially among children and people with respiratory illness, while creating local Michigan jobs. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that for every \$1 spent on reducing diesel pollution we save \$13 in health costs.

“Using clean diesel vehicles and equipment at construction sites will reduce pollution, protect the public health and put Michigan back to work – all of which will help build a stronger future for our families,” **Lynna Kauchek**, senior organizer with **Clean Water Action** said. “Clean construction will protect our Great Lakes, streams, rivers, land and air for generations to come. Investing in clean construction and transportation now will also create local jobs. This is a win-win proposal that will move Michigan’s economy forward, and we urge Congresswoman Candice Miller to support it.”

Under the transportation legislation plan, states would require contractors who successfully bid for a project to identify the off-road diesel equipment they plan to use during the construction process. States would then consider a U.S. EPA-approved measure for reducing emissions from the equipment and issue orders to the contractors requiring they install the best emissions-reducing options.

Federal funds to reimburse contractors for costs they incur would come from either an existing federal air-quality program, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, or from other areas in the current transportation bill. Lawmakers provided states with \$8.6 billion over the last four years through the mitigation program, which was created in the 1991 highway bill.

“Diesel pollution is a silent killer that threatens our families, our children and our quality of life – and that’s why this clean construction proposal is critical,” **Ahmima Maxey**, policy director of the **East Michigan Environmental Action Council** said. “By taking common-sense steps that protect people, create jobs and don’t increase costs, we can significantly cut diesel pollution, and protect our families and the public health. Today, we’re proud to support the parties driving this clean construction plan and we urge our congressional leaders to support it too.”

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