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Governor's New Executive Directive Moves Michigan Toward Cleaning Up State's Dangerous Diesel Problem

Now Congressman Schauer and Other Key U.S. Lawmakers Must Act

Lansing, MI - While last week's Climate Change Executive Directive (2009-4) signed by Governor Granholm paves the way for state government to reduce greenhouse gas emission, it also charts the course for substantial reductions in dangerous diesel pollution.

"We laud Governor Granholm and the Michigan Climate Action Council for their leadership in reducing diesel pollution" said Susan Harley, Policy Associate for Clean Water Action who served on one of the MCAC's technical workgroups. "But now Congress must act to protect public health from diesel pollution as they debate the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill."

Pollution from diesel vehicles poses a serious health threat to communities since it is associated with lung cancer, asthma, heart attacks, stroke, premature death and other serious health problems. The black carbon soot in diesel exhaust is recognized as a potent global warming agent. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S.E.P.A.), diesel emissions contribute to an estimated 21,000 premature deaths in the United States each year – more than drunk driving (17,000), HIV/AIDS (14,000) or firearm homicide (12,000).

"Congressman Schauer and others who serve on the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee can dramatically increase public health protections by funding modern diesel pollution controls like exhaust filters on federal transportation projects and requiring their use," said Ryan Bodanyi, Environmental Health Coordinator for Clean Water Action. "It's just common sense that projects meant to benefit the public should not harm public health."

The Clean Air Task Force estimates that at least 64 deaths occur due to diesel pollution within Congressman Schauer's district each year. In addition, over 97 non-fatal heart attacks, 1,351 asthma attacks, and 8,037 lost work days annually are caused by diesel pollution within Congressman Schauer's district.

"Clean diesel policies are also a win for our state's economy" said Bodanyi. "Estimates show that for every dollar spent on reducing diesel pollution, twelve dollars would be avoided in health care costs. Congressman Schauer has shown leadership on public health issues in the past and Clean Water Action members will be urging his continued leadership as this important decision is made."

Keybridge Associates estimates that a \$1 billion investment in clean diesel technology would yield 19,000 jobs. Michigan has three companies certified by the U.S.E.P.A. to manufacture diesel particulate filters

capable of reducing diesel pollution by up to 90%.

Executive Directive 2009-4 was issued in response to the Michigan Climate Action Council's (MCAC) recommendations contained in their final 2009 report. MCAC represents a group of diverse stakeholders including leaders from manufacturing, automotive industries, utility companies, environmental groups, universities, and government.

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