



April 26, 2023

Honorable Chair Liane Randolph

Honorable Board Members

California Air Resources Board

1001 "I" Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Opposition to Natural Gas Vehicles in the ACF Rule

Dear Chair Randolph and California Air Resources Board Members,

On behalf of our coalition of business, science, labor, environmental, health, and environmental justice groups, like the Greenlining Institute, PowerSwitch Action, and Communities for a Better Environment, the ACF Advocacy Coalition appreciates the opportunity to comment. We'd like to respond to some of the claims made by others with respect to fracked gas vehicles and strongly support that the ACF rule must exclude fossil fuel, or fracked gas, vehicles.

Some stakeholders, including the gas industry, have positioned an exemption for fracked gas vehicles as a benefit to environmental justice communities under the idea that CARB should allow for the purchase of the cleanest available vehicle in the case of zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) unavailability. We strongly recommend that we must be mindful and selective about what type of technology is allowed in this rule because it may have long-term impacts on pollution-burdened communities and perversely incentivize the building of new infrastructure and combustion trucks that could harm communities for decades to come. Research conducted by CARB found that due to their degrading emission control systems, natural gas vehicles can pollute more than diesel vehicles.¹ In stark contrast, the study reinforced that zero

¹ "In-Use Emission Performance of Heavy Duty Natural Gas Vehicles." *California Air Resources Board*, July

emission technology, including battery electric and fuel cell vehicles, will consistently produce air quality benefits. Further, the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) found that natural gas trucks may have even worse consequences for climate and air quality than the very diesel trucks that this rule intends to phase out.² Additionally, natural gas trucks can produce the same amount of smog-forming NOx pollution as diesel trucks, if not more.³ CARB must protect communities from this deadly pollution by fully transitioning medium- and heavy-duty fleets away from fossil fuels, including natural gas.

Fortunately, communities don't have to wait for ZEVs. At least 135 ZEV models have already been delivered to the nation's fleets and 148 models are available for order and pre-order, with greater than 500 ZEV models available around the world.⁴ The ACT's approval in June 2020 supports CARB's projection that there will be an increase in ZEV sales in future years. On the demand side, companies have already eagerly submitted tens of thousands of EV truck orders.⁵ In the medium- and heavy-duty vehicle sector, CARB projects there to be a total 513,000 Class 2b-8 ZEV population by 2035, 840,000 vehicles by 2040, 1.2 million vehicles by 2045, and nearly 1.6 million vehicles by 2050.⁶ With the increasing number of ZEVs on the road, ZEVs are here now and must be capitalized for maximum public health and air quality benefits in the state's most pollution-burdened communities.

While CARB should strive to address inclusivity and equitable process concerns, it should be cautious of requests that may extend the long-lasting consequences of fossil fuels for already disadvantaged communities. CARB must safeguard the integrity of the ACF rule by prohibiting fracked gas vehicles from having a role in the state's clean transportation future.

2021,

https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/Natural_Gas_HD_Engines_Fact_Sheet.pdf.

² Muncrief, Rachel. "A Comparison of Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) Emissions from Heavy-Duty Diesel, Natural Gas, and Electric Vehicles." *The International Council on Clean Transportation*, Sept. 2021, <https://theicct.org/sites/default/files/publications/low-nox-hdvs-compared-sept21.pdf>.

³ Lejona, Victor, and Steve Carroll. "Dedicated to Gas." *Cenex*, Oct. 2019, <https://www.cenex.co.uk/app/uploads/2019/11/324-003-004-Dedicated-to-Gas-Assessing-the-Viability-of-Gas-Vehicles.pdf>.

⁴ "Proposed Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) Regulation Preliminary Language Revisions Workshop." *California Air Resources Board*, Feb. 2023, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/acfpres230213_ADA.pdf.

⁵ Carpenter, Susan. "Big Rigs Begin to Trade Diesel for Electric Motors." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 19 Mar. 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/19/business/electric-semi-trucks-big-rigs.html?utm_campaign=Hot+News&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=85105997&hsenc=p2ANqtz--Qpv58hOL-161rE6w6xMWUhoA7nFwExhuSenBdnJISzjLJf-Q3KECuRhGrXtikXtMfOkIfcGOy6GQK_c78umV8xCHKPg&_hsmi=85105997.

⁶ "Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation Workgroup: Zero-Emissions Vehicle Infrastructure and Availability." *California Air Resources Board*, California Air Resources Board, Jan. 2023, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2023-01/acfpres23013_ADA_0.pdf.

Moving forward, the ACF rule implementation must include continued engagement and partnership with environmental justice and community organizations to ensure the work on the ground is achieving equitable outcomes. This means building equity into the process of implementation by deeply engaging stakeholders including community members, who are on the frontline of dangerous pollution, or independent trucking contractors, who may bear costs of new ZEVs, so as to learn about their priorities, needs, and challenges in adapting to the regulation. This engagement process should aim for equitable outcomes that increase accessibility and affordability, and promote fair labor opportunities.

In sum, we urge CARB to protect communities and ensure the ACF rule does not allow for the purchase of fracked gas vehicles. We look forward to working with CARB and others on the rule to ensure its equitable implementation.

Sincerely,

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