

Voinovich-Carper Diesel Emissions Reduction Act of 2010

What is the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA)?

In 2005, Congress amended the Clean Air Act to establish a voluntary national and state-level grant and loan program to reduce diesel emissions. The legislation had wide government and industry and environmental organizations support and passed the Senate in 2005 with strong bipartisan support (92 to 1).

Specifically, DERA:

- Authorized \$1 billion in grants and loans over 5 years (\$200 million annually);
- Allocated 20% of funds to states to develop retrofit programs with an additional 10% as an incentive for states to match federal dollars; and
- Established project priorities (most cost-effective and public health benefits).

Why is funding for diesel emissions reduction needed?

Compared with traditional gasoline engines, diesel engines usually are more fuel efficient, have a longer life span, and without the proper technology, have greater, deadlier air emissions. Dirty diesel emissions are linked to 21,000 premature deaths, hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks, and numerous other health impacts every year. The EPA estimates there are 11 million diesel engines in America lacking the latest pollution control technology.

Retrofitting diesel engines provides enormous environmental benefits, yet there are few direct economic incentives for vehicle and equipment owners to do so. These financial incentives support voluntary rather than regulatory efforts to protect public health and help states meet EPA air quality standards.

What are the benefits?

DERA successfully uses federal dollars to leverage state and private resources to generate national investments in diesel retrofit technology. It is estimated that for every \$1 spent in DERA, there are \$13 in health and economic benefits in return.

The EPA estimates that DERA reduces particulate emissions that are not only deadly to human health, but also are a key contributor to black carbon, thought to be a global warming agent. Finally, the DERA program creates or saves, on average, 19,000 jobs for every billion dollars spent on diesel retrofit technology.

What does this legislation do?

DERA is currently authorized until FY2011; this legislation reauthorizes the same level of funding for an additional five years. This legislation also allows the EPA to establish rebates, along with loans and grants. Private entities under contract with a non-profit or government, can also now directly apply for funding.

What are examples of sectors that can benefit from DERA?

Agriculture, Construction, Freight, Transit, Locomotive, Port and Marine