



October 6, 2020

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor, State of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Cooper,

We write to express our appreciation and support for signing the multi-state memorandum of understanding (MOU) with 14 other states and the District of Columbia to zero-out emissions from new medium- and heavy-duty trucks and buses. Our diverse coalition includes business leaders, public health advocates, community and social justice groups, scientists, and environmental advocates. We share a commitment to improving air quality and addressing climate change while developing a more equitable and inclusive North Carolina.

As you know, fossil fuel trucks and buses are a significant source of air pollution, including nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter (PM). North Carolina's transportation sector accounts for almost 65 percent of all in-state NOx emissions, which leads to smog, and contributes to PM pollution.¹

Polluted air means higher rates of asthma and other severe respiratory diseases, as well as a greater risk of hospitalization, lost work opportunities, and premature death.² Public health burdens increase costs for families and businesses, and are disproportionately borne by communities of color and low-income communities. Moreover, preliminary research suggests that areas with higher long-term air pollution levels suffer higher COVID-19 death rates.³

The transportation sector also produces 32 percent of North Carolina's greenhouse gas emissions causing climate change.⁴ Transitioning trucks and buses on our roads to zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) will reduce smog-forming pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions, improving health outcomes and mitigating the effects of climate change.

This MOU is vital to cut air pollution while stimulating the economy and supporting quality jobs. Thanks to fueling with less expensive electricity, battery-electric and fuel cell electric ZEVs can help fleets and consumers save money. Further, the clean transportation industry is a rapidly growing, innovative employer. Investments in this sector will serve as a powerful job creator and economic stimulant, helping develop North Carolina's future economy.

We commend your administration's efforts to improve our air and address climate change. We look forward to supporting the development of a robust and timely Action Plan and working with you to achieve the MOU's objectives.

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/air-emissions-inventories/air-pollutant-emissions-trends-data>

² <https://www.epa.gov/clean-air-act-overview/air-pollution-current-and-future-challenges>

³ Exposure to air pollution and COVID-19 mortality in the United States. Xiao Wu, Rachel C. Nethery, Benjamin M. Sabath, Danielle Braun, Francesca Dominici. medRxiv 2020.04.05.20054502; doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.04.05.20054502>

⁴ <https://files.nc.gov/ncdeq/climate-change/ghg-inventory/GHG-Inventory-Report-FINAL.pdf>

Respectfully,

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