

DRAFT

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee

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October 14, 2005

Senator Barbara Mikulski
U.S. Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0001

Re: H.R. 3983 The Gasoline Security Act of 2005

Dear Senator Mikulski:

The Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) opposes the Federal Fuel List provision of H.R. 3983 because it would undermine national efforts to reduce air pollution through the use of cleaner fuels.

In addition, we have serious concerns about extending ozone attainment dates, another provision of this bill, because it would delay achievement of cleaner air and a healthy environment for residents in the Washington, DC-MD-VA nonattainment area.

MWAQC has been designated under Section 174 of the Clean Air Act (CAA), for developing a strategy for attaining Federal air quality standards. This assignment is carried out through a partnership among the States of Maryland and Virginia and the Government of the District of Columbia, and the region's local governments in the non-attainment area.

- **Limits on use of fuels (Section 107)**

Clean fuels, both gasoline and diesel, provide important health benefits to residents of metropolitan regions struggling with unhealthy levels of ozone in the air. The Section 107 provision of H.R. 3983 would eliminate the states' ability to adopt clean fuel programs, taking away a major tool in the states' effort to control pollution and to achieve compliance with the health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Low sulfur fuel is an essential component of the national effort to reduce harmful emissions from diesel engines, and Section 107 of this bill would adversely affect its supply and undermine programs to retrofit older diesel engines. The provision would also undo much of the progress being made in reducing harmful pollution from all mobile sources, passenger cars, trucks, buses and construction equipment. Under current law, the use of this fuel is required to begin in June 2006.

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Furthermore, alternative fuels such as biodiesel offer energy independence from imported oil as well as incentives to domestic agriculture.

- **Extension of ozone attainment dates (Section 108)**

Section 108 of H.R. 3893 would remove clean air compliance deadlines currently in place. Such an action could seriously delay, for an undetermined period, the achievement of cleaner air and a healthy environment for Washington area residents and those who live downwind of this region.

Under the provisions of the existing law, states and localities in the metropolitan Washington region have adopted numerous control measures and spent millions to reduce pollution in pursuit of Clean Air Act compliance deadlines.

We believe states or regions should be required to have all their control measures in place before EPA grants them the deadline extension provided by H.R.3893. Metropolitan regions should be expected to meet the established deadlines and adopt all necessary controls as a good-faith down payment on their commitment to meet Clean Air Act standards.

We hope you will consider these issues—and our proposal—when the bill is taken up. Once again, we would like to emphasize that the use of cleaner fuels is crucial to the effort of reducing pollution and meeting compliance deadlines. We thank you in advance for your assistance regarding our concerns about provisions of H.R.3983, the “Gasoline for America’s Security Act of 2005.”

Sincerely,

Dana Kauffman, Chair
Supervisor, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

CC:

Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, D.C.
Rep. Roscoe Barlett, MD
Rep. Christopher Van Hollen, MD
Rep. Steny Hoyer, MD
Rep. Albert Wynn, MD
Rep. Jo Ann Davis, VA
Rep. Tom Davis, VA
Rep. James Moran, VA
Rep. Frank Wolf, VA
Senator Paul Sarbanes, MD
Senator George Allen, VA
Senator John Warner, VA