



July 13, 2016

The Honorable Renee Ellmers
1210 Longworth House Office building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doris Matsui
2311 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mrs. Ellmers and Mrs. Matsui:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC), I am writing to express our strong support for the reauthorization of the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) program. MWAQC is designated under Section 174 of the Clean Air Act (CAA) to develop strategies for attaining federal air quality standards within the Washington Metropolitan Area air quality region. This responsibility is carried out through a partnership among the region's local governments within the States of Maryland and Virginia as well as the government of the District of Columbia, which are currently updating the maintenance area for fine particles (PM_{2.5}) and developing a redesignation request for the non-attainment area for the 2008 ozone NAAQS. Continuation of this program will help enable expeditious replacement of an aging diesel fleet with new, high efficiency vehicles.

Reducing diesel emissions is particularly important for attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) in the region, including the associated public health benefits such as reducing respiratory and cardiovascular disease. Recent EPA estimates show that DERA has helped upgrade more than 73,000 vehicles, saving over 450 million gallons of fuel since its inception. This equates to cumulative reductions of nearly 15,000 tons of PM_{2.5} and 335,000 tons of harmful NOx emissions. The impacts of improved air quality associated with DERA initiatives has saved over \$12 billion dollars in associated healthcare costs over its lifetime. The DERA program also increases research and development of clean diesel technology and leverages additional funds from the private sector. Currently, EPA estimates that every federal dollar of assistance from DERA is matched with \$3 of non-federal funding. DERA is a fiscally responsible method of reaching fulfillment of federal air quality standards nationwide.

Non-attainment and maintenance areas particularly need cost-effective measures to improve air quality, and DERA stands as an exemplary legislation that works to that end. This program has helped to improve air quality in schools, highways, ports, railyards, and construction sites across the country. Continued funding will enable collaborative programs between leaders from federal, state, and local government, the private sector; as well as environmental groups in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. In our region, leading projects under the DERA program include locomotive and marine vessel repowers in Washington, DC, construction equipment retrofits in Maryland and Virginia, the Port of Baltimore dray truck replacement program, the Maryland Freedom Fleet Voucher program, and the SmartWay Program which aims to increase supply chain efficiency through improvements in freight transportation. Overall, the program addresses one of the more important sectors for reducing NOx and fine particles – non-road diesel equipment. Such equipment contributes 15 percent of NOx emissions in the region, as well as 7 percent of fine particle emission. Reducing these emissions through cost-effective programs such as DERA will help the region continue to achieve and maintain compliance with the ozone and fine particle NAAQS.

Thank you for working towards the reauthorization of this important federal program. We hope you will approve the reauthorization of this tremendously beneficial program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brianne K. Nadeau'.

Brianne K. Nadeau
MWAQC Chair