

**United States Environmental Protection Agency**

**Docket: EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0257**

**June 2, 2021 Public Hearing on EPA's Reconsideration  
of Previous Administration's Withdrawal of California's Waiver to Enforce  
Advanced Clean Cars Standards**

**Testimony of Paul Billings, National Senior Vice President of Public Policy  
American Lung Association**

Good morning, I am Paul Billings, National Senior Vice President of Public Policy at the American Lung Association.

Air pollution is a major threat to public health. Air pollution causes tens of thousands of people to die prematurely each year in the United States, and motor vehicles are a leading source of the emissions that create ozone or smog and particle pollution. Transportation is also the leading contributor to climate change. The American Lung Association's most recent State of the Air report found that more than 135 million people in the United States— more than 4 in 10 people - live in counties with unhealthy levels of air pollution. Our report also found that people of color are much more likely to live in counties with failing grades for air pollution than white Americans. People of color are more than three times more likely to live in the most polluted counties than white people. We know that people who live near roadways, oil and gas operations including refineries bear a disproportionate burden of air pollution, and that climate change is making that pollution worse. Let me repeat this, climate change is making air quality worse.

This continuing burden of air pollution is why state authority to set more protective motor vehicle standards is so important. It is why the American Lung Association and leading health and medical groups strongly support the EPA's proposal to restore California's authority to enforce greenhouse gas pollution standards and zero emission technology standards.

In order to protect their residents' health from climate change, California must have the authority to set more protective vehicle standards and states must have the ability to follow. To date, [13 states and the District of Columbia](#) have utilized this option, with Nevada, Minnesota and Virginia now in the process of adopting these more health-protective standards.

I'd like to briefly share the long history of state authority. Congress granted California this unique authority in the 1967 Air Quality Act. California Republican Senator George Murphy led the charge to grant the state this authority because it had "compelling and extraordinary

circumstances” and the state had established the first tailpipe emission standards in the nation in 1966. Congress affirmed this authority in the 1970 Clean Air Act and in subsequent amendments in 1977 and 1990. In the 1977 Amendments, other states were given the authority to opt-in to the California standards. So, for more than 50 years, California has had this authority. The ability of states to set and embrace stricter pollution standards has driven innovation, slashed emissions, and improved air quality not just in the United States but around the world. This authority literally has changed the world because of the innovation it has driven beyond California borders. Vehicles produce less pollution in the U.S., in Europe and in Asia.

Despite this remarkable progress in cleaning up air pollution, many communities in the United States are still breathing unhealthy air, and as I remarked in my opening, transportation remains the leading source of carbon pollution that is driving climate change. Therefore, states must continue to push for electrification. EPA must use its authority to facilitate the transition to electric transportation and Congress must invest in electrification infrastructure from EV School Buses to a clean electric grid powered by non-combustion, renewable electricity. With states in the lead and a federal commitment, we can finally meet the Clean Air Act’s promise of healthy air for all.