



May 21, 2021

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget Committee

The Honorable Richard Bloom
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee 2

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee 5

Via Email

Re: Budget Recommendations for Clean Air and Healthy Transportation

Dear Chairs Skinner, Ting, Bloom, Durazo, and Wieckowski and Committee Members:

On behalf of the American Lung Association, I am writing to provide our recommendations as the Legislature considers Governor Newsom's May Revise budget proposals. We appreciate the commitments shown to healthier air, and more equitable and sustainable mobility options for all Californians. We call on the Legislature to act immediately to approve investments in clean air and sustainable transportation, especially in our most impacted communities.

Despite decades of progress in air quality, California continues to face the most difficult air pollution challenges in the United States, due in large part by the transportation sector, and with the worsening conditions caused by climate change, reducing air pollution becomes even more challenging. According to the American Lung Association's 22nd Annual [State of the Air](#) report, 98 percent of Californians live in an area with unhealthy ozone and/or particle pollution. In addition, the report found that California is home to seven of the ten most ozone-polluted cities in the nation, and six of the most particle-polluted cities. Breathing air pollution can contribute to a wide range of negative health outcomes, including asthma attacks, heart attacks and strokes, lung cancer and premature deaths. There are significant disparities in pollution exposures and health outcomes affecting lower-income communities and communities of color.

We urge the Legislature to act immediately to approve allocations to advance California's efforts to attain national ambient air quality standards and state climate standards. The budget process is a critical opportunity to improve the lung health of all Californians, and especially communities bearing a disproportionate air pollution burden **today**. As the transportation sector is the leading contributor to California's ozone pollution and climate challenges, the American Lung Association offers the following priority recommendations:

Equitable Transition to Zero-Emission Transportation

The American Lung Association supports the May Revise \$3.2 billion proposal (via the Climate Change package) to accelerate zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure in support of attainment of clean air and climate standards, as well as additional infrastructure programs included in the Transportation agency proposals.

- **Approve the proposed \$1.4 billion investment in zero-emission drayage trucks, school and transit buses in addition to the proposed \$315 million for the Clean Trucks and Buses Program through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund.** Heavy-duty vehicles place a disproportionate impact on the state's harmful air pollution and are often concentrated in disadvantaged and low-income communities. The transition to zero-emission trucks and buses is urgently needed to protect public health and reduce disparities in pollution exposures.
- **Increase equity-based zero-emission transportation programs to \$500 million (up from May Revise proposed \$400m).** California offers a robust portfolio of programs centered in expanding healthier transportation options to communities most impacted by pollution. For example, Clean Cars 4 All helps low-income drivers transition to zero-emission vehicles or utilize transit or other zero-emission mobility options while also facilitating the retirement of the state's oldest, most polluting vehicles. However, these programs are historically oversubscribed and under-resourced.
- **Approve the proposed \$500 million in zero-emission infrastructure through the California Energy Commission's Clean Transportation Program (CTP).** We respectfully urge that half of the CTP electrification funds be required to benefit disadvantaged communities or low-income communities and require that half of these infrastructure projects be located in these communities. In addition, we ask that at least 30 percent of funds support medium- and heavy-duty vehicle infrastructure.
- **Reauthorize AB 118/AB 8 transportation programs to provide stable and consistent support for local air districts and state agencies to improve air quality.** Carl Moyer and other programs funded through this existing clean transportation funding source are critical to attainment of health-protective clean air standards and should be reauthorized this year.
- **Approve the \$407 million Transportation package proposal for the California State Transportation Agency to invest in zero-emission bus and rail equipment and infrastructure** and increase intercity rail and intercity bus service.

Local Air Quality and Community Air Protection Investments

The American Lung Association supports investments targeted at cleaning up local sources of pollution that threaten public health. Our recommendations on some of the proposals included in the May Revise along with additional funding needs are detailed below:

- **Approve a minimum \$325 million allocation proposed for AB 617 Community Protection Programs.** We view this investment as critical in reducing harmful air pollution in the state's most impacted communities. We urge the Legislature to continue to evaluate and expand funding to support investments and implementation at the local-level, community engagement, and monitoring and cleaning up air pollution in these regions as the list of priority communities has continued to expand.
- **Approve \$1,170,000 allocation to support the Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) implementation Heavy-Duty Vehicle Inspections and Maintenance Program (SB 210).** This funding will support DMV's portion of the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Heavy-Duty Inspection and Maintenance "Smog Check for Trucks" program authorized by Senate Bill 210 (2019). This program will be implemented by DMV, CARB and the California Highway Patrol and is a vital component of attaining health-protective clean air standards and reducing excess emissions in heavily impacted communities.

- **Create a \$75 million incentive program to accelerate the shift to zero-emission lawn and garden equipment (Assemblymember Berman proposal).** Small off-road engines including lawn care and other equipment present local and regional pollution burdens. Smog-forming emissions from this sector surpass those from the light-duty vehicle fleet in California, and are projected to grow significantly.

Healthy, Sustainable Communities and Active Transportation

The American Lung Association supports the focus of the May Revise Transportation proposals on the expansion of transit, healthy and active transportation and reductions in vehicle miles traveled. These elements, and our support for the Housing package proposal to expand regional implementation of infill and sustainable communities, are noted below:

- **Increase the proposed Active Transportation Program investment to \$1 billion (increase from May Revise proposed \$500m).** Increasing healthy, active modes of transportation are critical to improving public health, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and increasing access to healthy mobility options. Reducing vehicle miles traveled and increasing safe, practical active transportation is needed to reach the state's air quality and climate goals.
- **Approve the proposed \$420 million investment for the Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Program at the Strategic Growth Council.** The TCC is vital program for reducing local air pollutants and empowers communities to develop key projects that provide health and environmental benefits in their area. This program will help ensure equitable access to vital resources to ensure clean healthy air in the state's most impacted communities.
- **Approve the proposed \$500 million investment of federal funding to the Regional Early Action Program (REAP)** with a focus on achieving the goals of Senate Bill 375, California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act. This funding will augment the Department of Housing and Community Development's REAP program to support infill housing development and other actions that reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated pollution, in collaboration with the Strategic Growth Council (SGC), Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and CARB.
- **Add a \$10 million investment to the University of California Institute for Transportation Studies in support of research on curbing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector** to help identify opportunities for California to advance climate pollution reduction strategies.

In closing, the American Lung Association urges you to prioritize reductions in harmful air and climate pollution through the strongest possible investments in zero-emission transportation and sustainable transportation to improve public health for all Californians. Thank you for your consideration, and please contact me with any questions at William.Barrett@Lung.org.

Sincerely,



Will Barrett
Director, Clean Air Advocacy