

As Prepared for Delivery
Comments of Liz Scott
National Director, Advocacy, Healthy Air
American Lung Association
On
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards for Model Years 2027 and Later Light-Duty and Medium-Duty
Vehicles
Docket ID EPA-HQ-OAR-2022-0829
May 9, 2023

Thank you. My name is Liz Scott – L I Z S C O T T – and I’m the National Director of Advocacy for the American Lung Association’s Healthy Air Campaign. Thank you for providing the to testify today. I support EPA’s proposal to limit pollution from light and medium duty vehicles and urge finalization no later than the end of 2023.

Access to clean air is important. It’s hard to be good at your job, supportive of your family or an active member of your community if you are struggling to breathe. The transportation sector is a major contributor to poor air quality that plagues too many communities across the country. While we can’t simply do away with car trips, we can make those car trips healthier by making them less polluting. To do that though, I ask EPA to finalize, at minimum, Alternative 1 and to increase the rule’s stringency through Model Year 2035.

Pollution from cars puts the health of anyone at risk, but many people – including kids, seniors, people with lung and heart disease and people who live near major roads are at a greater risk. Vehicle pollution disproportionately harms people of color and low-income communities. On top of other disparities compared to predominantly white communities and more affluent communities that lead to poorer health outcomes, these communities are overburdened by direct exposure to vehicle pollution.

The American Lung Association’s “State of the Air” report released last month showed that 64 million people of color lived in counties that received failing grades for ozone or particle pollution. Over 13 million people of color live in counties that failed every grade tracked, with more than half of those identifying as Hispanic or Latino. That means people of color are 3.7 times more likely than white people to live in areas with the unhealthiest air. The report also showed that nearly 2.6 million people with incomes at or below the federal poverty level live in counties failing all grades.

Another report from the Lung Association released in March of 2022 found that a transition to zero-emission vehicles powered by zero-emission non-combustion electricity would yield \$1.2 trillion in public health benefits between 2020 and 2050. The analysis found that the 500 US counties with the highest percent populations of color (which was about 16% of all counties assessed) would experience 40% of the health benefits. While cleaning up pollution on a national level would still require intentional actions to make sure benefits are actually felt by these communities, finalizing tighter emissions levels on light- and medium-duty vehicles is a necessary part of the solution.

Commented [LKB1]: I want to avoid conflating race and income level

I urge EPA to finalize emissions limits that are at least as tight as Alternative 1 and to do so no later than the end of 2023. Thank you for your time.