



April 26, 2016

Senator Ricardo Lara, Chair
 Senate Appropriations Committee
 California State Capitol, Room 2206
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 1383 - Reducing Super Pollutants - Support

Dear Chairman Lara and members of the committee,

On behalf of the undersigned health and medical organizations and professionals, we are writing in strong support of Senate Bill 1383 (SB 1383, Lara) that requires reductions in short-lived climate pollutants or “super pollutants.” This bill is a vital public health measure that will protect residents across the state, and especially in our most disadvantaged communities, from health-damaging air pollution, and bring additional health benefits while reducing the health impacts of climate change.

Super pollutants contribute to and worsen California's longtime air pollution and health challenges. California is home to some of the unhealthiest air in the United States. Despite decades of progress in cleaning up the air, air pollution still remains a significant health burden. The American Lung Association's 2015 *State of the Air* report found that the top five US cities most impacted by unhealthy ozone days are in California, as are the top seven cities burdened with unhealthy particle pollution days. Health impacts of air pollution range from asthma attacks and hospitalizations to lung and heart illnesses, cancer and premature death. These health impacts of air pollution cost billions annually and contribute to over 7,000 premature deaths per year in California. Millions of California's residents also suffer from food insecurity, which is associated with increased risks for diabetes and hypertension. These health and economic burdens fall disproportionately on our most disadvantaged communities.

SB 1383 calls for the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop a plan and implement strategies to cut super pollutant emissions, with specific targets to reduce black carbon by 50%, methane by 40% and fluorinated gases (f-gases) by 40% by 2030. These targets are urgently needed. While California has implemented some measures to address these pollutants, there is a strong need to place a higher priority on cutting these powerful pollutants as quickly as possible.

Super pollutants impact health in multiple ways. While these pollutants exist a relatively short time in the atmosphere, they deliver an extremely damaging dose of climate pollution compared to carbon emissions. According to the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, methane is 86 times as potent as carbon dioxide over a 20 year period; black carbon can be thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide. By focusing on cutting super pollutants now we can immediately slow global warming and reduce the serious health impacts of climate change while improving the air in communities around the state. Health and climate impacts of super pollutants include the following:

Black Carbon – Tiny soot particles that come from the incomplete burning of fossil fuels, especially diesel, as well as biomass and wood burning, warm the atmosphere and contribute to respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses, heart attacks, lung cancer, asthma attacks, slowed lung growth and development in children, and early death. These small particles bypass the body's natural defenses, affecting the lungs, heart and other organs. Recently, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), an arm of the World Health Organization, determined that outdoor air pollution and particle pollution cause lung cancer.

Methane – Methane is a primary component of natural gas and is produced from oil and gas operations, dairy operations, landfills and waste handling. Methane has both direct and indirect health hazards and represents approximately 20 percent of the climate change problem. Methane also contributes to increases in global ozone levels that worsen regional smog levels and make it more difficult to attain federal clean air standards. Methane leaked from oil and gas operations is accompanied by smog-forming pollutants and air toxics such as benzene, toluene, and formaldehyde that are linked to health impacts ranging from lung damage and asthma attacks to premature deaths. About 40% of food is wasted, ending up in landfills where food waste produces methane (Natural Resources Defense Council, 2012).

Additional pollution, health and food insecurity concerns can be addressed through measures that divert food waste and reduce methane generated from landfills and dairies.

Fluorinated-gases (f-gases) – Produced in industrial and manufacturing sector, f-gases are an extremely potent climate forcing pollutant that can live in the atmosphere for a short time, but cause over a thousand times the warming of carbon dioxide during that time. F-gases are the fastest growing source of carbon pollution today. Ratcheting down these gases will quickly help reduce our most powerful global warming emissions.

Removing all three of these super pollutants from our atmosphere today will bring immediate health benefits to communities and reduce the risk of respiratory, cardiac, cancer and other health impacts from increases in air pollution, extreme heat events, drought, wildfires, vector-borne diseases, flooding, water and food insecurity linked to climate change.

Our organizations believe that SB 1383 is good medicine for California to save lives today and ensure a healthier future tomorrow, and are in strong support of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Barbara Sattler, RN, DrPH, FAA, Founding Member
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environment

Kris Calvin, President & CEO
American Academy of Pediatrics – California

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Individual signers

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