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## **Now is the Time for a Cure for the Broken Port Trucking System**

**The following statement is from the Steering Committee of the Coalition for Clean & Safe Ports:**

Over the past few weeks, the Port of Oakland has acknowledged massive delays in the formation of a Comprehensive Truck Management Program (CTMP), delayed their plan to implement container fees to fund environmental clean-up, pulled back final approval of the Maritime Air Quality Improvement Plan, and delayed funding a Bay Area Air Quality Management District-led truck clean-up program. The delays on these programs ó which have been in the works for at least two years ó merely continue the Port's legacy of missed deadlines and broken promises. And each day of delay in reducing pollution is a day that West and East Oakland residents, workers, and businesses at the Port have to struggle to breathe.

We need reductions in toxic diesel truck pollution at the Port of Oakland right away. However, the sorely needed truck clean-up should not be financed on the backs of impoverished drivers and taxpayers.

We are concerned that the Port appears to be hastily retreating from every major environmental initiative. Because of the Port's indecision, the impacted community and workforce continue to suffer great impacts to their health and well being with no relief in sight.

We recognize these are tough economic times for the Port, but we cannot afford the price to our public health of further delays. We agree with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the California Air Resources Board that "A cleaner truck fleet is not just a health issue; it's also a legal and economic necessity for the Port and its customers." According to Air District Executive Officer Jack Broadbent, "The time to clearly identify the solution and the funding mechanisms for 2,000 cleaner trucks is now."

Indeed, the time is now for the Port of Oakland to take bold action like the LA Port did and enact a sustainable program that makes the well-financed shipping industry and its trucking company clients take responsibility for cleaning up the truck fleet. The ban on dirty, old trucks at Southern California ports that went into effect in October produced a fifty percent reduction in toxic diesel soot pollution overnight. Children living in Southern California port communities are breathing easier, while Oakland residents and truck drivers continue to be at risk from deadly diesel-related diseases including asthma and cancer.

With the new State port truck clean air standards soon to go into effect in 2010, it is more important now than ever that the Port take prompt action on the CTMP and that it includes the employee provision. Time is of the essence. Last May, the Commission voted to hire Beacon

Economics to conduct a study on the economic impact of the employee provision of a CTMP. The Beacon study is scheduled to be completed by January. The Port should bring a policy forward for a vote by the Commission in January.

The discussion during last week's Port Commission meeting became very contentious. Although there appears to be consensus that action must be taken to reduce the amount of toxic diesel soot spewed into the air by old, dirty Port trucks, the debate over who should pay for it – the profitable goods movement industry or impoverished port truck drivers and impacted communities – continues. *The question that it all boils down to is this: who will pay the price for clean air?*

Regardless of the different opinions people may have, Port Commission meetings must be a forum in which everyone may exercise their First Amendment rights without fear of retaliation. We condemn any efforts to intimidate, retaliate against, or otherwise harass truck drivers who wish to speak out, whether in support of or against, industry reform.

Our environmental-labor-community coalition continues to be effective in advocating for a sustainable solution that protects our health and the environment and paves the way for good jobs for our community. We look forward to continuing to work together in partnership to move forward to victory.

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Brian Beveridge, West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project  
Doug Bloch, Change to Win  
John Brauer, The Workforce Collaborative  
Shirley Burnell, Oakland ACORN  
Sharon Cornu, Alameda Labor Council, AFL-CIO  
Kristi Laughlin, Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice  
Margaretta Lin, East Bay Community Law Center  
Chuck Mack, International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
Swati Prakash, Pacific Institute  
Aditi Vaidya, East Bay Alliance for Sustainable Economy