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Brooklyn Action Corps Neighborhood Association

March 24, 2021

RE: 2021 diesel bills

Dear [Senator/Representative/Governor],

The Brooklyn Action Corps neighborhood association encourages the advancement of HB2814, HB2674, and HB2479.

The Portland metro region is within the 95th percentile nationally for diesel pollution exposure, and the Brooklyn neighborhood in particular has some of the worst concentration of air pollutants in Portland. Our neighborhood is uniquely sited near major sources of air pollution, many of which go unaddressed due to their "indirect" status. This includes multiple highways, industrial activity, and a large Union Pacific rail yard with extensive heavy truck traffic.

We appreciate the substantial progress that the Legislature has made towards cleaner air in the Portland metropolitan area since 2019 with the compromise diesel bill. However, that bill is still two years away from its first phase of implementation and was enacted with several weaknesses and gaps that will limit its effectiveness. Meanwhile, air quality, which has improved during the pandemic, will quickly return to previous unhealthful levels as the economy recovers and as our metropolitan area grows in population.

We ask your support of the following three bills. Together, they will complement the 2019 diesel bill.

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1. **HB2814** proposes to direct the Environmental Quality Commission to develop and adopt rules for indirect sources of diesel particulate matter (PM) such as railyards, warehouses, and shipping centers. Regulating indirect sources is a common sense, health-based approach that will make a significant impact on the air quality in our neighborhood. Regardless of whether the site's air pollution is considered direct or indirect, the impact on surrounding communities is the same and should be treated as such. Mitigating indirect sources will help to address many of the known problems from diesel pollution, from lost productivity to cancer and disease to early deaths.
2. **HB2674** would provide additional funding for the Clean Diesel Engine fund established by the VW Settlement Agreement, and approved by the Legislature in 2019. The source of funding would be a truck tire tax, diesel fuel tax, leasing fees, and a tax on new truck purchases. Following California and Washington examples, the Clean Diesel Fund will enable more owners to retrofit or replace their old, unfiltered engines.
3. **HB2479** would expand existing definitions of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) to include the unregulated aerosol Black Carbon, which is a short-term climate pollutant with a warming impact up to 1,500 times greater than carbon dioxide. Reducing Black Carbon emissions will have major public health benefits and a substantial mitigation effect on climate warming. Diesel emissions are a major contributing source of black carbon.

We encourage the development and adoption of funding sources to ease the impact for small and disadvantaged businesses. **A just transition is essential to making these improvements.** Programs must be structured to ensure that impacts are proportional and equitable.

We are particularly concerned about the disproportionate impact of diesel emissions on our community and on BIPOC and lower-income neighbors. We know that people with higher incomes can at least reduce their risk

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from diesel pollution by living further away from pollution sources and investing in advanced home air purification systems. Too many people in our neighborhood do not have that flexibility. They and we are depending on your Committees to move these bills along toward enactment this year.

Sincerely,

Brooklyn Action Corps
board@brooklyn-neighborhood.org

Cc: Senator Kathleen Taylor
Representative Rob Nosse
Governor Kate Brown