



Connecticut Alliance Against Diesel Pollution

Working to significantly reduce the health risks from diesel pollution in Connecticut

Environment Northeast

Clean Water Action

Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice

Connecticut Fund for the Environment

News Release

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Scientist Demonstrates Effectiveness of School Bus Pollution Filters at Capitol *Reinforces Urgency of Passing Senate Bill 1032 to Fund Statewide School Bus Retrofits*

HARTFORD, CT— Legislators and citizens gathered today outside the Legislative Office Building to watch Clean Air Task Force Senior Scientist Bruce Hill, Ph.D. demonstrate the dramatic reduction in school bus pollution that can be achieved with the installation of a pollution control device. Diesel exhaust can build up inside the cabins of conventional diesel school buses, putting children at risk of asthma attacks, permanent lung damage, and other cardiovascular and respiratory problems associated with the toxic and irritating fine particles formed when diesel combusts.

Dr. Hill used an air pollution monitor to demonstrate how diesel particulate filters (DPFs) like the one on the Norwich, CT school bus used for the monitoring reduce tailpipe soot particle emissions up to 90%. "We have rigorously tested the benefits of DPFs on school buses and found that they eliminate tailpipe emissions from coming into the cabins of conventional school buses," said Dr Hill. "However, emissions controls are also necessary to eliminate emissions from the engine compartment. Our research has documented significant concentrations of diesel soot entering the front door of the bus at stops from both the tailpipe and engine in uncontrolled buses," he said.

Senate President Pro Tempore Donald E. Williams, Jr., Sen. Bill Finch, co-chair of the legislature's Environment Committee, and others spoke in support of Senate Bill 1032, An Act Reducing Diesel Emissions in School Bus Cabins, which if passed and fully funded will provide both types of pollution control devices advocated by Dr. Hill for all full-sized school buses in the state.

SB 1032 recently passed through the Environment and Education Committees unanimously and the proposed budget currently provides \$10 million for school bus pollution controls. Roger Smith, Campaign Director for Clean Water Action noted, "We cannot afford to wait another year to clean up our school buses so we need the legislature to fully fund this bill. \$11 million will reduce pollution between 50% and 85%. Lesser amounts will mean that some buses receive less effective pollution controls, and we think our children's health is worth more, not less"

“We always do everything we can to protect the health and welfare of our children,” said Sen. Williams. “It only makes sense that we make the investment to be sure they are free as possible from exposure to this harmful pollution.”

As of 2007, under federal law, new buses must be equipped by the manufacturer with the best available technology to keep diesel fumes from entering the cabin of the bus where children are exposed. Unfortunately, as Senator Finch noted, “Most of our state’s operating school buses are older models, and the pollution levels that build up inside those cabins are unbelievably high.”

“I think this is one of the most important investments we can make this year. Our children are our view into the future, and we owe it to them to make sure that the air they’re breathing is clean and healthy. As we read in the newspapers this past weekend, the federal government has failed to take action on this. California’s voters approved \$200 million last year to retrofit their buses. We can do it for \$11 million in Connecticut, and we absolutely should do it this year.”

Alice Liddell, Policy Analyst at Environment Northeast stated, “It’s a win-win situation; cutting diesel exhaust from school buses not only helps kids breathe easier, it reduces global warming pollution and will help the state achieve its Climate Change Action Plan goals.” Black carbon, a component of diesel exhaust, is a powerful global warming pollutant.

More information on Clean Air Task Force’s research on school bus emissions can be found at: <http://www.catf.us/publications/view/82>.

The **CT Alliance Against Diesel Pollution**, a growing coalition coordinated by Environment Northeast and Clean Water Action, and also led by Connecticut Fund for the Environment and the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice, is working to take action at the state level. The goal is to reduce harmful diesel emissions from priority fleets including school buses, transit buses and state construction equipment which place children at risk of serious health disorders and are concentrated in highly polluted urban areas.

Founded in 1996, the **Clean Air Task Force (CATF)** (www.catf.us) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoring clean air and healthy environments through scientific research, public education, and legal advocacy. CATF’s staff includes scientists, engineers, economists, MBAs and lawyers. The organization works closely with more than 40 state, local, regional and national groups to educate the public, media, industry and public decision makers on the science and economics of clean air policies through fact-based and locally appropriate advocacy.

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