



Statement of David R. Celebrezze
Ohio Environmental Council, Director of Air & Water Special Projects
September 23, 2008

We are here today to celebrate the good works the cities of Cleveland, Cleveland Heights and Parma Heights are undertaking to clean up their diesel fleets.

Why clean up diesel fleets? They are long-lived pieces of machinery that are the work horses of our economy. They transport our children to school, move goods throughout the country, help us get to work on time, clean our streets, and remove the snow. Why do we need to spend time and money cleaning them up?

Well, diesel engines have a dark, sooty side. We have all been stuck behind a school bus, transit bus, semi, snow plow, or other diesel vehicle belching that plume of smoke. Maybe you try to slow down to let that cloud dissipate, or maybe you speed up to get past it. One thing is certain-those fumes we breathe in are toxic. In fact, diesel exhaust has 40 known toxics in it.

Diesel engines emit particle pollution, or soot. This particulate matter is called PM 2.5 because it is only 2.5 micrometers in diameter or 1/70th the width of a human hair. When breathed, it bypasses our natural defenses and lodges itself into our lungs or travels into our blood stream. Medical researchers have linked diesel exhaust to dizziness, painful breathing, asthma attacks, heart and lung disease and early death.

A study by the Clean Air Task Force revealed that, in Cuyahoga County, the average lifetime diesel soot cancer risk is 395 times greater than the US EPA's acceptable cancer level of 1 in a million.

Economically, diesels contribute to Cuyahoga County failing to meet federal air quality standards for particle and ozone pollution. If we don't clean up this problem the federal government could withhold money from the county.

Diesel pollution also contributes to climate change because it releases black carbon which, early studies suggest, is 680 times more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

The good news is that solutions to diesel pollution exist. By implementing the 6 R's of diesel fleet clean up we are improving our economy, environment, and our health. Those 6 R's are:

1. Refuel with cleaner fuel
2. Repower with low-emission engines
3. Replace older equipment with new equipment
4. Rebuild or repair existing fleets
5. Reduce idling
6. Retrofit with emission control devices

To help these cities green their fleet, OEC received money from a Supplemental Environmental Project or SEP. In a Consent Decree between the United States, State of Ohio, and Premcor; the Lima Refinery agreed to give the OEC money for the installation of diesel retrofit technologies to reduce particle pollution and ozone precursors from municipal trucks and/or buses. This decree is a result of the US EPA and Ohio EPA identifying violations of certain provisions of the Clean Air Act by Premcor.

As we will hear these cities are proactive in greening their fleets. However, they cannot do it alone. The state of Ohio has a responsibility as well. The Ohio Diesel Emission Reduction Grant Program is set to end in June. The state can do right by funding this program for another year to the tune of \$30 million dollars. At the federal stage, Congress can authorize the Diesel Emission Reduction Program to \$200 million a year for the next three years. These programs will help us reach air quality standards and improve our quality of life.

And here to talk about what actions they have taken to combat diesel emissions is Cleveland Heights Mayor, Ed Kelly.

Thank you Mayor Kelley. I would like to present this check for \$5,000 to Cleveland Heights to contribute to your clean up efforts and for the purchase of diesel emission reduction technologies.

Now I would like to invite Andrew Watterson who is the Sustainability Manager for the City of Cleveland.

Thank you Andrew. I would like to present this check for \$14,000 to the City of Cleveland to purchase diesel emission retrofits for the City's fleet.

Now I would like to invite Joe Sebes, Director of Human Services for the City of Parma Heights.

Thank you Joe. I would like to present the City with a check for \$5,000 to go towards retrofitting part of your fleet.