

CONTACT: Jed Mandel
(312) 929-1960

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COMMERCIAL TRUCK AND ENGINE MANUFACTURERS RAISE SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS ABOUT CALIFORNIA'S NEW OMNIBUS LOW-NO_x REGULATIONS

Chicago, August 27, 2020 – The California Air Resources Board (CARB) approved today sweeping new regulations affecting heavy-duty trucks sold in the state. The Omnibus Low-NO_x Rule includes a 90 percent reduction in tailpipe NO_x emissions, plus nine additional regulatory requirements on new heavy-duty truck and engines. Those additional requirements include a 50 percent reduction in particulate matter emissions, stringent new low-load and idle standards, an unproven in-use testing protocol, unworkable extended deterioration requirements, a new California-only credit program, and extended and costly mandatory warranty requirements. “CARB’s far-reaching Omnibus Low-NO_x Rule is not technologically feasible or cost-effective,” said Jed Mandel, President of the Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA). “In addition, the requirements starting in 2024 fail to provide the statutorily required minimum leadtime for manufacturers to develop the technologies,” added Mandel.

The regulatory requirements in the Omnibus Low-NO_x Rule will first become effective in 2024, at the same time as the Advanced Clean Trucks regulations that CARB approved on June 25, 2020. The Advanced Clean Trucks rule mandates that manufacturers convert increasing percentages of their heavy-duty trucks sold in California to zero-emission vehicles. Therefore, manufacturers must simultaneously implement the expansive low-NO_x regulations at the same time CARB is compelling them to displace those trucks with zero-emission vehicles. “The compounding and overlapping nature of the two regulatory mandates that CARB approved this summer threatens California’s commercial truck market. Instead of purchasing expensive, complicated and unproven new vehicles in California, truck operators and freight shippers are likely to maintain old trucks longer and seek solutions outside the state,” predicted Mandel. “We fear that jobs, the economy, and the environment all will be at risk as truckers buy vehicles out of state, dealers lose sales and the state loses jobs and tax revenue,” he added.

CARB has materially underestimated the costs associated with implementing the Omnibus Low-NO_x Rule and significantly overestimated the potential environmental benefits, as detailed in EMA’s extensive, data-driven, science-based, and third-party validated technical comments on the rule. As EMA’s comments further explain, the Omnibus Low-NO_x Rule will result in increased fuel consumption, placing the regulations in conflict with CARB’s greenhouse gas standards.

Effective and implementable alternatives exist to the cost-prohibitive and unworkable Omnibus Low-NO_x regulations that CARB is imposing on California's commercial trucking industry. "We recognize the significant ozone and air quality challenges in California. In response, we proposed a national low-NO_x program to CARB that would have resulted in meaningful NO_x reductions in California at significantly less cost than the Omnibus Low-NO_x Rule," said Jed Mandel, EMA's President. "Unfortunately, CARB rejected our ideas and has adopted a package of expensive and impracticable, California-only regulatory mandates that will only affect a small portion of the heavy-duty trucks operating in California and therefore will not achieve meaningful NO_x reductions," Mandel added.

Testifying to the Board on the Omnibus Low-NO_x Rule, Mr. Mandel pointed to the comprehensive data and technical analysis that EMA submitted to CARB and noted, "EMA and its members stand ready to work with CARB and its staff to implement a credible NO_x reduction program." Following the Board's decision, Mandel explained that "a workable and implementable heavy-duty NO_x program is attainable -- one that addresses California's environmental needs while preserving the availability of new commercial vehicles that trucking fleets in the state need to move goods in California. Unfortunately, the rule CARB adopted today is not it."

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The Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA) represents the world's leading manufacturers of internal combustion engines, zero-emission powertrains, and on-highway medium- and heavy-duty trucks. EMA works with government, industry, and other stakeholders to help the nation achieve its goals of cleaner air, slowing climate change, and improving highway safety. EMA strives for environmental and safety standards and regulations that are technologically feasible cost-effective, and that provide safety and environmental benefits. Through continuing improvements in truck and powertrain technology, emissions control, and safety systems, EMA's member companies are the leaders in providing efficient, clean, and safe commercial vehicles that both enhance environmental protection and the safety of the nation's transportation system.