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June 21, 2017

Governor Kate Brown
State Capitol Building
900 Court Street NE, 160
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Brown,

Re: Support of Clean Air Initiative legislation

The Southeast Uplift board urges you to support the Clean Air Initiative legislation.

We believe it protects the health of families and our communities. As concerned parents and residents of southeast Portland, we want state leaders to enact and enforce strong regulations against all sources of air pollution, this means both point and mobile sources.

Oregon has traditionally applied a thin coat of green paint to cover a poor job on environmental issues. In recent years this has never been clearer as continuing revelations have emerged concerning environmental problems in southeast Portland.

Four years ago, the representative from Brentwood Darlington pointed out that national research indicated that our grade schools were in the worst five percent of all U.S. schools on air quality. This was underscored by last year's scandal where it gradually became known that U.S. forest service scientists had developed a new technology for identifying hazardous metals that indicated that two of the epicenters of harmful metals were in our area of the city – Brentwood-Darlington and Hosford-Abenethy.

Having a clean environment that our children, loved ones and neighbors can enjoy is something that we can start on today. It is crucial that we start implementing rules that will clean and sustain the air that all of us share.

These rules are so desperately needed for all of Oregon but especially for the Kerns, Buckman, Hosford-Abenethy, Brooklyn, Sellwood-Moreland, Creston Kenilworth, Reed, and Eastmoreland neighborhoods who live next to the major 99E and UPRR transportation routes. Brentwood-Darlington is also home to Precision Castparts – one of the city's largest polluters. We have and continue to be disproportionately impacted by dangerous metals emissions.

Our neighborhoods are highly trafficked areas making this issue even more immediate. Current lenient regulations allow for unfiltered heavy trucks to operate in our backyards leading to high diesel particulate emissions. Medical research directly ties diesel particulates to cancer. Economic research indicates that filtering diesel trucks is vastly cheaper than caring for cancer victims suffering from the impact of diesel particulates.

The UPRR/99E corridor makes our neighborhoods even more susceptible to diesel particulates.

Maps developed by the state DEQ indicates that the highest level of diesel particulates runs directly through our community. At the center of the problem is the UPRR Brooklyn rail yard where a thousand aging trucks a day drive through Brooklyn and Creston-Kenilworth. We demand a stop to Oregon's role as the elephant's graveyard where dirty diesel equipment comes to live out their final days.

Tackling this problem means that all sources of pollution must be targeted with absolutely no exceptions to anyone. Our neighborhoods are home to many manufacturing factories that emit high amounts of toxic metals into our atmosphere. We need to address these high levels of lead as well as the many other toxic metals/ chemicals being emitted into our air today during the Cleaner Air Oregon legislation process.

If we are to improve our air quality it means placing stricter limits on all forms of emissions. It means finding solutions that will also actually clean our air and not just maintain the status quo.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and again we ask that you help us by supporting and enacting strong rules and regulations when the Cleaner Air Oregon legislation comes to a vote.

On behalf of the Southeast Uplift Board of Directors,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. McCullough', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert McCullough
Chair

Uplifting community advocacy since 1968.

Ardenwald-Johnson Creek • Brentwood-Darlington • Brooklyn • Buckman • Creston-Kenilworth • Eastmoreland • Foster-Powell
Hosford-Abernethy • Kerns • Laurelhurst • Montavilla • Mt. Scott-Arleta • Mt. Tabor • North Tabor • Reed • Richmond
Sellwood-Moreland • South Tabor • Sunnyside • Woodstock