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AB 426 – Air Quality Data – Fact Sheet

Summary

AB 426 expands the current authority of our statewide Air Pollution Control Districts (APCD) and Air Quality Management Districts (AQMD) to request and measure data from indirect sources of air pollution, such as distribution centers and warehouses, and evaluate health risks from those facilities on the surrounding communities.

Background

Air pollution is regulated at both the state level and the local air district level, with the two regulatory schemes working hand in hand. Under the existing regulatory scheme, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has primary responsibility at the state level for regulating vehicle pollution from cars, trucks, and buses. Air districts have primary responsibility at the local level for regulating pollution emitting from sources that are **not** vehicles, including stationary sources of pollution. An issue has arisen because air districts do not have enough information regarding “indirect sources” of pollution, which includes facilities that *attract* truck traffic and other “mobile” sources of pollution. Indirect sources of pollution include warehouses, distribution centers, ports, shopping centers, and event centers.

One in every six Black children in America have asthma, higher than the national average according to CDC Data. Growing up in areas with high diesel air pollution is one of the factors that contributes to asthma among youth, as the case with many Black and Brown youth. According to a study done in the Eastbay, children who live near freeways have much higher likelihood for negative respiratory symptoms than those who do not.

Problem

Diesel trucks emit more particulate matter than all of the state’s power plants combined. Air districts currently do not have adequate data nor the authority to gather data in order to combat the multiple pollutants emitted by diesel trucks. In order to adequately address diesel pollution to protect the public’s health, air districts need the ability to gather information and work with local jurisdictions to mitigate negative impacts on residents from diesel pollution.

People who live near indirect sources that attract truck traffic and other mobile sources that emit fine particulate and other pollutants are at high risk for exposure to these health-threatening air pollutants emitted by these medium and heavy-duty vehicles; further, communities near freeways and busy roadways have compounded health impacts due to near-constant exposure to air pollutants.

What this bill does

AB 426 will expand authority to Air Quality Control Districts and Air Pollution Control Districts to reduce pollution and improve air quality standards for California by doing the following:

1. Add toxic air contaminants, including diesel particulates, to the pollutants covered under air districts’ indirect source rules.
2. Allow air districts to collect data under a local indirect source rule so that local health risks can be properly assessed.

These provisions would allow air districts to identify local indirect sources of air pollution that contribute to detrimental community health impacts.

Support

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