



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

1

Testimony in Support
SB 687: Department of the Environment –
Zero–Emission Medium and Heavy Duty Vehicles – Regulations
(Zero–Emission Truck Act of 2022)

To: Chairman Pinsky and the members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Phil Webster, PhD, Lead Advocate on Climate Change
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.

Date: February 24, 2022

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) strongly supports SB 687: Department of the Environment – Zero–Emission Medium and Heavy Duty Vehicles – Regulations (Zero–Emission Truck Act of 2022) and urges a FAVORABLE report by the committee.

The UULM-MD is a faith-based advocacy organization based on the Principles of Unitarian Universalism. Two Principles are particularly relevant. The Second Principle, Justice, equity and compassion in human relations and the Seventh Principle, Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Universalists believe in justice and equity in human relations. Residential neighborhoods located near major roads and highways face disproportionate burdens from traffic and transportation pollution. These neighborhoods are far more often communities of color due to decades of residential segregation, and bear a burden of unsafe pedestrian conditions, higher rates of asthma and other health conditions, and unremitting noise pollution. In addition to accelerating the electrification of trucks through the Advanced Clean Truck Rule, more actions are needed to address the impact of truck traffic in communities.

Unitarian Universalists also believe that we should all have respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Trucks account for 10% of vehicles on the road but contribute 30% of carbon emissions and 57% of particulate matter (PM2.5) emitted by the entire transportation sector in the United States. People who are heavily exposed to PM2.5 and other toxic truck emissions like nitrogen oxides are at a greater risk for developing asthma and many lung diseases like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and lung cancer.

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To help meet its long-term climate, air quality, and public health goals, Maryland must pass legislation to adopt the Zero-Emission Truck Act of 2022. The Act is a critical tool in the effort to combat toxic air pollution that makes us sick and contributes to climate change.

How can there be justice and equity if one part of society is reaping all the benefits, while another is paying all the costs?

We support SB 687 and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

Phil Webster, PhD

Lead Advocate, Climate Change UULM-MD