



February 9, 2023

Testimony on SB 224 – Clean Trucks Act of 2023  
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee  
Position: Favorable  
Environmental Defense Fund supports SB 224

The proposed legislation would require the Maryland Department of Environment to adopt the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) rule, joining 7 other states that have adopted, recognizing the substantial benefits the ACT would provide. The rule requires vehicle manufacturers to sell an increasing percentage of zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles through 2035 and must be adopted now for it to take effect on Model Year 2027 vehicles.

Adopting the ACT will result in significant health benefits for Marylanders, who are facing emissions from transportation in a quantity only second to New York State. A large share of that comes from the diesel trucks and buses that drive on the state's roads – nearly 20% of transportation greenhouse emissions in the state come from diesel. The pollution that causes climate change and harms health is not evenly felt – Baltimore City and Prince George's County, home to more than 25% of the state's population, face exposure from fine particulate matter that is 37 and 23 percent higher, respectively, than the state average. In Baltimore City, average exposure is almost twice the nation's average and not too far below Los Angeles County. The most polluted census tracts, those living near freight corridors, ports, and depots, have a higher concentration of low-income and residents of color – almost 15 percent of people living in the highest burden areas are Latino, compared with a state Latino population of just 9 percent. The ACT's one-time fleet reporting requirement would help further pinpoint how fleets are contributing to these hot spots of high pollution exposure.

The message is clear. The ACT will help electrify a sector that is disproportionately responsible for pollution that warms the climate and harms the health of Maryland's residents. It will also go a long way in helping Maryland achieve Governor Moore's target of reducing greenhouse gases 60% by 2030 and is a core means of achieving a transition to 100% zero-emission truck and bus sales, the overarching goal of the medium-and heavy-duty memorandum of understanding signed by former Governor Hogan in 2020.

The ACT will provide much needed policy certainty to market participants that may be hesitant to commit to zero-emission vehicles without a clear pathway to make the transition. Fleets such as FedEx and Walmart have expressed a desire to adopt zero-emission vehicles but need to know there will be ample vehicles to purchase. Increasing supply to meet demand will help the market achieve economies of scale, which will bring down upfront costs and continue to lower the total cost of ownership. The ACT is designed to be flexible and gradual, giving manufacturers room to take advantage of technology and cost improvements, transfer credits between manufacturers and vehicle classes, and adjust to possible fluctuations in sales from year to year. By adopting the ACT, alongside other complementary policies such as the Heavy-Duty Omnibus rule, equitable infrastructure deployment and effective rate design, the state can reduce energy consumption and emissions from the transportation sector, meet federal ambient air quality standards, and, with the right mechanisms in place, achieve renewable energy goals.

Maryland is on the right path to cleaning our transportation sector, and the ACT is a powerful tool to continue the state's commitment and complement other programs and policies. EDF urges a favorable report for SB 224.