



American Lung Association Testimony Senate Bill 224  
Education, Energy, and the Environment  
February 9, 2023  
Support

Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. **The American Lung Association in Maryland strongly supports Senate Bill 224 – Clean Trucks Act of 2023.** The Lung Association believes that Maryland must continue to enact policies that will make meaningful reductions in harmful air and climate pollution and ultimately protect the health and well-being of Marylanders. Senate Bill 224 would be an important step toward health protection.

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, through research, education and advocacy. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to improve the air we breathe; to reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families; and to eliminate tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases.

The American Lung Association's [2022 State of the Air](#)<sup>1</sup> report revealed that four in ten Americans, more than 137 million people live in counties that had unhealthy levels of ozone and/or particle pollution. In Maryland there were mixed results with 54% living in a community with unhealthy levels of ozone or particle pollution. Ozone and particle pollution can harm the health of all Maryland residents and of particular risk are children, older adults, pregnant people, and those living with chronic diseases – approximately 100,000 children and 422,000 adults are living with asthma in Maryland. Both ozone and particle pollution can cause premature death and other serious health effects such as asthma attacks, cardiovascular damage, and developmental and reproductive harm.

Climate change is one of the most urgent threats to human health of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Reduction of harmful pollutants caused by burning fossil fuels and other combustion is critical to improving the local health today and ensuring a stable climate for future generations. Climate change is first and foremost a public health issue and one that creates disproportionate impacts across the state's diverse communities. Further, climate change is making the job of cleaning our air much more difficult as temperatures rise and drive conditions for unhealthy ozone pollution days, among other health challenges.

The American Lung Association supports measures to reduce all emissions that contribute to climate change. Such measure should include but are not limited to transitioning away from fossil fuels to increased use of clean, non-combustion, renewable energy sources and zero-

emission transportation technologies, expanding energy conservation and efficiency measures and establishing enforceable and science-based limits on emissions for all sectors including industrial, energy, commercial, residential and transportation. We support measures to reduce other outdoor air pollutants while reducing emissions that cause climate change.

The transportation sector is the leading source of air and climate pollutants. The American Lung Association recently issued our [Zeroing In on Healthy Air](#)<sup>2</sup> report which finds that a widespread transition to zero-emission vehicles powered by clean energy sources could result in up to 110,000 avoidable deaths and \$1.2 trillion in public health benefits across the United States over the next 30 years. In Maryland specifically, the report found that transition to clean energy transportation could have \$27.8 billion in public health benefits including 2,530 avoided deaths, 63,600 avoided asthma attacks and 315,000 avoided lost workdays. Achieving these public health benefits requires strong policies and investments at the local, state, and national levels to spur the transition to zero-emission vehicles and non-combustion, electricity generation. The transition to zero-emission technologies would benefit residents across the United States and in Maryland and especially those most burdened by power plants and transportation hubs like highways, ports, and warehouses therefore policies should be enacted to support this transition as Senate Bill 224 proposes to do.

More specific to the benefits of zero-emission trucks, the Lung Association recently issued [Delivering Clean Air: Health Benefits of Zero-Emission Trucks](#)<sup>3</sup> that examined the health benefits of transitioning to zero-emission trucks and power generation in counties impacted by major trucking routes. Heavy-duty trucks deliver major doses of pollution to communities throughout the United States along with their cargo. The report indicated the transition to zero-emission trucking in communities with heavy trucking traffic could generate \$735 billion in public health benefits, 66,800 in fewer premature deaths, 1.7 million fewer asthma attacks and 8.5 million fewer lost workdays. Maryland specifically could see \$19.8 billion in health benefits, 1,803 avoided premature deaths, 46,875 asthma attacks avoided and 231,260 in lost workdays through the shift to zero-emission trucks and energy. We support Maryland's efforts to accelerate the transition of heavy-duty trucks to zero emission as a significant opportunity to reduce health impacts and disparities in pollution-burdened communities.

The American Lung Association believes that all people are entitled to breathe healthy air and to be free of the adverse health effects of air pollution. We support the protection of all people from the harm of air pollution, especially those who suffer disproportionate exposure from local sources of emissions. We recognize that major sources of air pollution are often located near where many people especially communities of color or lower-income residents, live and work which means their pollution burdens can be more immediate and disproportionately harmful.

**The Lung Association strongly supports Senate Bill 224 as an integral way to address the problem of air pollution in our state and significantly reduce harmful emissions and health disparities. We urge the committee to give a favorable report and pass this legislation through the General Assembly.**

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and if you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at [aleks.casper@lung.org](mailto:aleks.casper@lung.org) or 202-719-2810.

Sincerely,



Aleks Casper  
Director of Advocacy

<sup>1</sup> American Lung Association. State of the Air Report, 2022. Available at: <https://www.lung.org/research/sota>

<sup>2</sup> American Lung Association. Zeroing in on Healthy Air, 2022. Available at: <https://www.lung.org/clean-air/electric-vehicle-report#>

<sup>3</sup> American Lung Association. Delivering Clean Air: Health Benefits of Zero-Emission Trucks, 2022. Available at: <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/e1ff935b-a935-4f49-91e5-151f1e643124/zero-emission-truck-report>