


Santa Barbara County
Air Pollution Control District

May 25, 2007

The Honorable Hilda Solis
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act of 2007.

Dear Representative Solis:

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act of 2007 (HR 2548). Although Santa Barbara County does not have a port, the County has 130 miles of coastline that are heavily traveled (more than 7,000 transits in 2005) by ocean-going vessels mostly heading to or from the ports of Long Beach, Los Angeles and Hueneme. Given the location of the Santa Barbara Channel Islands, large ships are often traveling and emitting pollutants just ten to fifteen miles off our coastline. These ships are significant emissions sources, growing due to increasing trade with Asia.

I am very concerned about the potential health impacts associated with the emissions from these large ships, as they are essentially unregulated and burn the dirtiest fuels available worldwide. The emissions from these ships can cause serious heart and lung problems, and can contribute to an increased risk of lung cancer. Currently, ocean-going vessels emit over 45% of the emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) in Santa Barbara County – more than all road vehicles combined. If left uncontrolled, we project that marine vessels will contribute almost 75% of the County's NOx pollution by the year 2020. Although not all of this pollution affects air onshore, this forecasted increase in air pollution from large ships could wipe out the hard-won air quality improvements achieved in the last 30 years here.

This legislation is critically important for the air quality in our county and the nation. USEPA's delays in setting standards for these heavily-polluting ship engines have been deplorable. We applaud your leadership in moving forward to require USEPA to take action.

Sincerely,



Terry Dressler
Air Pollution Control Officer

cc: Representative Lois Capps
Representative Jane Harman