



Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Rachel Carson State Office Building

P.O. Box 2063

Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063

March 23, 2006

Secretary

717-787-2814

The Honorable William F. Adolph Jr.
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
House Post Office Box 202020
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2020

Dear Representative Adolph:

I wanted to share with you the results of a March 16 report issued by the National Research Council reaffirming the role of states in reducing air pollution by setting tailpipe standards tougher than those chosen by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The findings of this report validate Pennsylvania's Clean Vehicles Program as an effective way for our commonwealth to achieve emissions reductions that will enable us to attain and maintain national ambient air quality standards and improve public health.

In evaluating California's authority to set transportation emissions standards that are stricter than federal standards, the congressionally mandated report determined that the basis for California's rule is scientifically valid and necessary. The report further supports the conclusion that these low-emission vehicle standards for passenger cars will help to achieve real and significant emissions reductions. In Pennsylvania, that means 6 percent to 12 percent greater reduction in VOCs and a 9 percent greater reduction in NOx from vehicles over the federal standard by 2025. It also means a 5 percent to 11 percent greater reduction of six toxic air pollutants, including a 7 percent to 15 percent additional benefit for benzene, a known carcinogen.

Equally important for Pennsylvania, the NRC panel concluded that despite the substantial progress in reducing emissions from mobile sources nationwide, more needs to be done to attain federal ambient air quality standards, and states should continue to have the right to adopt the measures that enable them to meet these challenges. The report recommends against giving EPA the power to stop states from adopting tough vehicle-emission standards similar to those in California. Pennsylvania adopted the California standards in 1998 in order to help reduce the emission of precursors of ground-level ozone and other air pollutants from new motor vehicles.

The panel also determined that the standards spur the development of better emission-control technologies that benefit the rest of the nation. That is important for Pennsylvania, where two-thirds of our residents live in the 37 counties designated nonattainment by EPA for failure to meet the federal health-based eight-hour ozone standard. Cars continue to be major contributors to air pollution, responsible for at least one-third of ozone-causing emissions in most areas, and will remain significant contributors even a decade from now. The California low-emission vehicle standards are important and

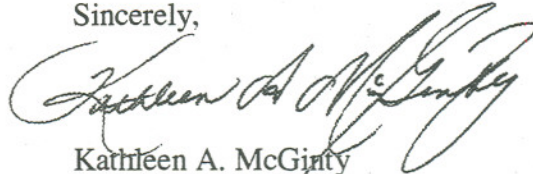
successful tools for mobile source emission reductions needed for improving air quality and protecting public health.

Business and industry in Pennsylvania already face strict emission regulations, with more to come under other new federal requirements. Because of all of these regulations, emissions from industry already are capped and/or declining. On the other hand, motor vehicles remain a significant contributor to air pollution, especially since Pennsylvanians increase their vehicle miles driven by some 2 percent every year. Going easier on cars and trucks is not only costly but also unfair to Pennsylvania business.

If the commonwealth changes its Clean Vehicles Program so that fewer emission reductions are required of automakers and dealers, additional regulation on factories, power plants or other entities will be required. Meeting the federal clean air standards by statutorily prescribed deadlines is not optional. The legislature should feel confident knowing that the NRC committee's report reaffirms that Pennsylvania made the right choice to adopt the California standards.

For further information, I am providing a Web address where you can read more about the report, <http://www4.nationalacademies.org/news.nsf/isbn/0309101514?OpenDocument> .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kathleen A. McGinty". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kathleen A. McGinty
Secretary