



California Independent Oil Marketers Association
3831 N. Freeway Blvd. #130 • Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 646-5999 • (916) 646-5985-fax
www.cioma.com

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CIOMA MEMBER ALERT CARB Blinks

CIOMA Members -

After a ten hour hearing yesterday the CARB Board directed staff to come back to the Board with options on modifying the CARB "Buy New Trucks" regulation by April of 2010. This marks a significant victory - CARB Board members repeatedly commented that they understood that affordability of the regulation was a huge issue in the current package. There were 94 witnesses - about 75% from the various aspects of the construction and trucking industry. All opposed had the same comments in one form or another - we cannot afford to comply.

In another victory, CARB directed staff to have the "Tran" science study completely redone and subjected to a new peer review. CARB Chair Mary Nichols offered a lengthy apology at the beginning of the hearing, noting the errors in not telling Board members in a timely manner of this transgression. Board members Dr. John Telles and Ron Richardson were firm in their resolve that an entirely new study needed to be done.

However, the Governor issued the following statement today on CARB's action:

"With numerous studies and overwhelming evidence on this topic, it is clear responsible action is needed to improve our air quality and protect the health of all Californians. And, as we move forward with these necessary environmental actions, I am committed to ensuring that our economy is protected. That is why I have directed my Administration to work with the board towards a solution that will help small and mid-size companies meet these important air quality regulations without moving back the final 2014 implementation date. I am confident that Chair Nichols and the board will continue to rely on the science in furthering California's environmental goals and protecting our economy at the same time."

This is troubling since it is not clear - at all - whether trucking interests will be able to afford the costly retrofits/repurchases needed to meet the 2014 SIP requirements, especially if the California economy falls into a slow recovery pattern.

CIOMA and other trucking interests will discuss our response to the decision early next week and offer ideas on how the regulation might be modified.

We sincerely thank all members who helped "soften up" CARB by communications with the press, Governor's office and legislators - it made a difference. More details will be provided in this week's News Brief.