



News Release
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REMARKS OF COUNCILWOMAN JANICE HAHN
As Given at the March 20 Harbor Commission Meeting Regarding
Adoption of Clean Trucks Program

“Good morning. And thank you for allowing me to speak. Today is truly a historic day. I cannot believe that this day is finally here. For years, I have been talking about 2 things—dirty trucks and the plight of the independent truck driver. I believe that both of these problems have posed a huge risk for our ports and our ability to deliver goods efficiently and safely.

The San Pedro Bay ports are the single largest contributor of diesel emissions and greenhouse gases in Southern California. For too long, it felt as though the only people paying attention to this public health crisis were those of us that live in the Harbor Area, even though the statistics clearly show that truck pollution is truly a regional public health risk problem, not just a local issue. And pollution from trucks has been one of the biggest challenges in terms of cleaning up the ports.

For one, port cargo is carried on the dirtiest trucks in the region, and driven by the lowest paid truckers, who get no benefits, no training, and only get paid by the load. Second, the sheer number of trucks, over 16,000, that pick up containers regularly, have required us to look at this problem from a different perspective.

We cannot expect that these hard working truckers can or should be responsible for maintaining their trucks and/or drive clean trucks. However, none of us can argue that we must begin to mandate the use of clean trucks in and around our ports...lives depend on it.

We must always remember that there is a human element to the goods movement industry. It is the truck drivers that keep the goods at this port moving. Every one of us relies on these drivers to get us the goods that we need every day. It is time for us to return the favor and support them...they are the true backbone of goods movement not only in this region but nationwide.

I also believe that it is a great opportunity to create good jobs for people all over Los Angeles so that more people can benefit from our booming international trade industry. I think it's great that there is a training and workforce development component to this plan, and I hope that we can expand this to create green jobs relating to the port trucking and logistics industry. We need to encourage business investment in clean alternative technology trucks and all the associated jobs to build and maintain those trucks. I want to recognize the hard work of everyone who worked to bring forward a solution that makes everyone – the cities, the trucking companies, the drivers, and the shipping industry – accountable for improving a terribly broken system.

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I would also like to commend the Board of Harbor Commissioners for their leadership and willingness to listen to all of us who have been talking about the need to fix this problem.

With your “aye” vote today, you are voting yes to a green plan that is sustainable over the long-term, that ensures public safety and security at our ports, and that will provide truck drivers with the dignity and respect that they deserve. I look forward to hearing this plan in my Trade, Commerce & Tourism committee and moving this item forward. Thank you.”

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