

Illinois Pollution Control Board (R24-17):

My name is Tom Coleman, and I am the Co-Chair of the Climate Reality Project, Chicago Metro Chapter. We are a 700-member non-profit organization that is also part of a 50,000-member national organization called The Climate Reality Project. We are dedicated to lowering noxious pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in Illinois.

Driving electric and powering my home from the sun has been crucial for me and my family from a financial, an emissions, and a moral standpoint.

Emissions from transportation in the USA is double that of global transportation emissions. At 28% of greenhouse gas emissions and 33% of emissions in Illinois, it is past time we recognize that action must be taken now to curve these emissions given the correlation between greenhouse gas emissions and global heating. Our annual emissions worldwide are about 53 billion metric tons, and our cumulative emissions are 1.2 trillion metric tons. As you know, carbon dioxide remains actively in the environment for 1,000 years. The U.S. is the #2 emitter worldwide and by far the #1 cumulative emitter in history at 431 billion metric tons. This accumulation must stop, and we are facing record global heating and a trend that is increasingly leading us to an escalation of expensive and life-threatening catastrophes for ourselves and our children.

We can fix the problem of toxic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and the adverse effects of pollution while lowering the total cost of ownership for residents. Advanced Clean Cars (ACC-II) and Trucks (ACT) are the way forward because these methods slowly move us away from polluting cars to a better future.

We can't negotiate away what 97% of climate scientists say is required in the next 5 to 10 years to move towards net-zero emissions by 2050. It is urgent that Illinois join many other states implementing ACC-II and ACT to show leadership for the United States and the world.

I will conclude simply by saying that some people say that these recommended changes restrict our freedoms to buy the cars we want to buy. Yet, if doing this pollutes and hurts people – about 4 to 6 metric tons of emissions per year per car – then this kind of freedom isn't freedom at all. Freedom to breath clean air should come first and this is where the Pollution Control Board can exercise its power for the kind of freedom most people want. And because ACC-II and ACT both gradually increase the number of zero emissions vehicles over time without outlawing any existing vehicles, this is the kind of gradual but urgent change we need to cut pollution and greenhouse gas emissions over the next 25 years.

Please approve ACC-II and ACT/HDO now for the future of Illinois and the nation.

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