



April 25, 2025

Illinois Pollution Control Board
60 E. Van Buren St., Ste. 630
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Comments in Support of Proposed Clean Car and Truck Standards (R2024-017)

My name is Paris Thomas, PhD, and I am writing on behalf of Equal Hope, which is a community-based organization dedicated to saving lives and improving quality of life by eliminating health inequities. We thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in support of adopting the proposed clean car and truck standards, which are critical to reducing air pollution in Illinois.

Our organization challenges the status quo as we strive to understand the context of people's lives and the barriers, they experience to help them achieve better health outcomes for their lives. Through research, quality assessment and improvements, advocacy, education, and patient navigation, we approach health holistically to achieve sustainable outcomes and true health equity.

We support the adoption of the clean vehicle standards—the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT), Heavy-Duty Low-NOx Omnibus (HDO) and Advanced Clean Cars II (ACCI)—because of the air quality and lung health benefits these standards will provide for community.

Transportation continues to be a leading source of harmful air and climate emissions in Illinois. The American Lung Association's "[State of the Air](#)" 2024 report found that five counties in Illinois received an "F" grade and more than half of all counties with reported data received a "C" or lower grade for high ozone days. Heavy-duty transportation sources are disproportionate contributors to the poor air quality in Illinois.

Air pollution affects the health of everyone, but is particularly harmful for children, seniors, and people with pre-existing conditions, and disproportionately impacts people with lower incomes and people of color who are more likely to live near transportation corridors. Ozone ("smog") and particle ("soot") pollutants can cause various respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses such as asthma attacks, worsening COPD, heart attacks, and strokes.

For cancer patients, this exposure is particularly dangerous. Studies show that breathing in fine particulate matter from vehicle emissions increases the risk of heart and lung complications, and even raises mortality rates for those undergoing chemotherapy or radiation. In fact, air pollution can worsen cancer outcomes and make every step of the treatment journey more difficult.

This is why Equal Hope's mission extends beyond cancer screenings and treatment navigation. We advocate for cleaner air and safer transportation, because every trip to the doctor should help—not harm—a patient's health. By supporting policies that reduce transportation emissions, we're not just fighting cancer—we're fighting for healthier futures for all our neighbors.

I strongly support the request in the petition to adopt clean vehicle standards. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paris Thomas, PhD
Chief Executive Officer