

Thanks for this opportunity to speak. My name is Tom Coleman, and I am the Co-Chair of the Climate Reality Chicago Metro. We are a 700-member non-profit organization that is also part of a 50,000-member national organization. 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.

GHG emissions from transportation in the USA represent 28% of all emissions. Light duty cars, SUVs, vans, and pick-up trucks are responsible for 59% of these emissions and another 24% are medium and heavier trucks and buses.

It is past time that we recognize that Illinois must take action to curb these emissions given the correlation between greenhouse gas emissions and global heating. And unfortunately, these carbon emissions are accumulating in the atmosphere and carbon dioxide remains active in the environment for about 1,000 years. With the U.S. the #1 emitter per capita worldwide and by far the #1 cumulative emitter in history, it is time for change in Illinois.

Some people want to negotiate with the science of sustainability when decisions are difficult. But the laws of physics cannot be compromised. They are what they are and 97% of scientists are clear on this point: Lowering emissions is urgent, and change is needed now.

I will conclude simply by saying that some people think that these recommended changes restrict our freedom to buy the cars we want to buy. Yet, if doing this pollutes and hurts people – about 4 to 6 metric tons of GHG emissions per year per car – then this kind of freedom isn't freedom at all. Freedom to breathe 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: Clean air and a more stable climate. And because Advanced Clean Cars and Trucks do not ban existing vehicles and gradually increase the number of clean vehicles over time, this is the kind of gradual change we need to cut pollution and greenhouse gas emissions over time.

Please approve Advanced Clean Cars and Trucks and HDO now for the future of Illinois residents and the nation. Thank you.