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Continue funding for (renewable) natural gas MD/HD vehicle technology

As a CEC Clean Transportation Program Advisory Board Member, I have the following comments:

Analysis by the ARB shows that zero emission vehicles, particularly BEVs, will play a leading role in helping the state achieve critical greenhouse gas (GHG) targets and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). However, technology maturity, cost and market factors suggest that BEVs are currently best suited for the light duty sector whereas for the medium and heavy-duty sector, especially larger heavy-duty class 7 and 8 pure BEV technology poses a significant challenge. Given the current status of technology, a balanced approach is needed, where ZEV technology can be effectively utilized for the light duty fleet and a combination of zero and near-zero emission vehicle technology be used for the medium- and heavy-duty fleet. This approach will address both GHG and criteria pollutant emissions. This approach has two important potential benefits: 1) it quickly, efficiently, and cost effectively achieves the necessary NO_x reductions for air quality; and 2) it still allows for the integration of ZEV components (larger battery power systems) into the heavy-duty market through hybrid applications with for applications that have short zero emission range capabilities.

Near Zero Emission Vehicles such as advanced natural gas engines using Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) can also play an important role in achieving local air pollution goals while supporting the efforts towards completely decarbonizing the transportation sector. While GHG emissions have received increased attention over the past two decades due to climate change, criteria pollutant emissions are still the cause of most immediate and serious health hazards and environmental damage related to combustion. The South Coast and San Joaquin Air Quality Management Districts (SCAQMD and SJAQMD) will significantly rely on a NO_x heavy reduction strategy in order to achieve the 2023 and 2031 federal ozone standard deadlines. Reducing NO_x emissions also lead to reductions in PM_{2.5} levels.