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Docket Number:	19-ALT-01
Project Title:	2020-2021 Investment Plan Update for the Clean Transportation Program
TN #:	235816
Document Title:	Executive Order N-79-20 - A technology-neutral approach to zero emission mobility
Description:	N/A
Filer:	Christina Cordero
Organization:	California Energy Commission
Submitter Role:	Commission Staff
Submission Date:	12/1/2020 10:46:16 AM
Docketed Date:	12/1/2020



Tuesday, November 10, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: EXECUTIVE ORDER N-79-20 - “A TECHNOLOGY-NEUTRAL APPROACH TO ZERO EMISSION MOBILITY”

Dear Governor Newsom,

We, the undersigned write today to thank you for your leadership on protecting our environment through Executive Order N-79-20, which will ensure a zero emission future in California. Transportation accounts for over half of our State’s greenhouse gas and criteria air pollutant emissions and has left some of our California communities with the worst air quality in the nation. Sadly, many of those affected communities have traditionally been left out of the decision-making process and this commitment marks a great step towards rebuilding those communities and allowing them to have a say in their own futures. This Executive Order will create a cleaner, healthier and safer environment for generations to come.

In particular, we would like to highlight and applaud a critical element of the Executive Order: it remains neutral on what technologies will be used to achieve this goal. We hope that this tenet is reflected in the regulations drafted by the California Air Resources Board as a result of this Order. It is critical that at the early stages of achieving this righteous goal, we do not pick winners and losers with regard to various zero emission technologies. Even within the text of the Executive Order, there are different guidelines for passenger and heavy-duty vehicles, which highlights the fundamental fact that the needs of various vehicle classes are diverse, dependent upon their individual utilization, and unlikely to be solved by a single zero emission solution.

Thankfully, we currently have two zero emission technologies at our disposal as we seek to both clean up our local air quality and reduce our contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. However, in order to leverage these zero emission technology options, it is imperative that the state take a technology-neutral approach to regulatory and legislative efforts that seek to inch us closer to a fully carbon-free transportation sector. There will be no fell-swoop solution, there is no silver bullet, and we must support and advance every zero emission mobility option possible as we work to realize the goals set forth in your Executive Order.

We stand deeply concerned about the impacts of medium- and heavy-duty trucks, buses, vessels, locomotives and off-road equipment on our local air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. These sectors are particularly difficult to convert to zero emission, and are especially well-suited for hydrogen fuel cell technology due to the longer range and higher power density available in that technology. Many in the scientific community believe that hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles are the only feasible approach to achieving zero emissions in these heavy-duty and commercial sector applications which represent the majority of our state's transportation-related emissions.

We write to ensure that the regulatory and executive arms of our state government do not become overly-reliant, and overly-invested, in a single technology in their zero emission efforts. We have observed that hydrogen fuel cell electric mobility solutions have been largely deprioritized compared to battery-based vehicles. Battery-electric vehicles are a wonder of modern technology, and they will no-doubt help us achieve our goals. But, that single technology will not get us there alone and fuel cell electric vehicles will need to be a significant part of our zero emission portfolio, particularly in the heavy-duty and commercial sectors.

Hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles, especially those fueled by renewable hydrogen, are also a fully zero emission technology and provide benefits that are not offered by current battery technology. For example, fuel cell electric vehicles can have their tank filled in a matter of minutes, provide power density and range comparable to incumbent diesel technology, and can provide centrally-located refueling for many of our local small businesses and fleets all while providing a mobility solution with zero well-to-wheels emissions of greenhouse gases or other harmful pollutants through the utilization of carbon-free, green hydrogen fuel.

We should also consider other economic impacts these technologies can have on California, such as our agricultural industry, which can convert waste into hydrogen locally. Also, landfills throughout the state

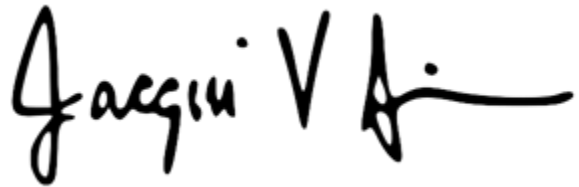
are already providing waste gas to hydrogen production facilities, and municipal waste generally represents a massive opportunity to turn otherwise harmful pollutants in to a high-value zero emission fuel – hydrogen.

Hydrogen fuel cells are but one of the many technologies we hope are able to be considered in California’s zero emission vehicle portfolio by 2035. We sincerely applaud you and your administration for drafting the initial Executive Order to be neutral on the technology that will bring us to this goal, and we simply ask that the same, technology-neutral philosophy be extended to all regulatory actions and that you support us, the undersigned members of your Legislature, as we seek to enact legislative policies that will help to facilitate the successful, technology-neutral implementation of Executive Order N-79-20.

Sincerely,



Senator Bob Archuleta
California State Senate, District 32



Assemblymember Jacquie Irwin
California State Assembly, District 44



Assemblymember Marc Levine
California State Assembly, District 10



Assemblymember Bill Quirk
California State Assembly, District 20



Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson
California State Assembly, District 64



Senator Nancy Skinner
California State Senate, District 9



Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo
California State Assembly, District 51



Assemblymember Autumn Burke
California State Assembly, District 62



Assemblymember James Ramos
California State Assembly, District 40

Cc:

Jared Blumenfeld
Secretary of Environmental Protection
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Wade Crowfoot
Secretary of Natural Resources
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mary Nichols
Chair, California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

David Hochschild
Chair, California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814