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The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club Supports CSSB 892 by Senator Menendez: Let's put an end to "coal" rolling

CSSB 892 does two good things that will help clean the air in San Antonio and other major metropolitan areas. CSSB 892 modifies the health and safety code so that the inspection and maintenance program applies to any gasoline-powered or diesel-powered vehicle that is required to be registered in and is primarily operated in an affected county and at least two and less than 25 years old; or subject to test-on-resale requirements under Section 548.3011, Transportation Code.

CSSB 892 also adds a requirement to the Transportation Code that makes it illegal for the owner or operator of a diesel-powered vehicle from modifying their emissions (exhaust) system in a manner which leads to more air pollution.

Commonly known as "Coal rolling" or "rolling coal" this is a practice where owners or operators typically of small trucks modify a diesel engine to increase the amount of fuel entering the engine in order to emit large amounts of black or grey sooty exhaust fumes into the air.

Texas faces air quality challenges from particulate matter, sulfur dioxide and ozone formation, and coal rolling exacerbates these issues both locally and regionally. With three areas now considered non-attainment for ozone, preventing the modification of these exhaust systems will provide a deterrence to this practice since making it illegal means the perpetrator could be subject to fines. In addition, any walker, jogger or bicyclist stuck behind a "coal roller" knows too well the damage it can do to human health.

Several other states, including Colorado, New Jersey and Maryland, have already made the practice illegal, as have some cities, like Cheyenne in Wyoming. The Sierra Club hopes that the Committee on Transportation will vote yes on this important bill.

Texans should be free to make their opinions known on all issues but "rolling" coal is not a form of cultural expression but a form of pollution, and we should end the practice or at least make sure there are consequences.

Thank you for your consideration,

Cyrus Reed
Conservation Director
Lone Star Chapter, Sierra Club
Cyrus.reed@sierraclub.org; 512-740-4086