

TESTIMONY

OF

THE HONORABLE ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA

MAYOR
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

ON THE

“THE MARINE VESSEL EMISSIONS REDUCTION ACT OF 2007”
S. 1499

BEFORE THE

SENATE
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

THE HONORABLE SENATOR BARBARA BOXER
CHAIR

AUGUST 9, 2007

PORT OF LOS ANGELES
BOARD OF HARBOR COMMISSIONERS HEARING ROOM

Senator Boxer and members of the Environment and Public Works Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to come before you today to express my support for S. 1499, the “Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act of 2007.” This legislation will put the federal government squarely to the task of mitigating the harmful environmental effects of international shipping while supporting the continued growth of foreign trade. I thank Senator Dianne Feinstein for her co-sponsorship of this important legislation, and I want to acknowledge the work of Congresswoman Hilda Solis who has sponsored the companion legislation in the House of Representatives along with Congresswoman Jane Harman. I enthusiastically endorsed your legislation upon its introduction and look forward to its final passage.

This is an extremely important hearing on the pressing issue of mitigating air pollution at our nations’ seaports. I certainly appreciate the necessity of the “Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act,” as I have struggled with the task of addressing the mitigation of goods movement-related air pollution in Los Angeles. These harmful emissions are a result, in part, of the great business successes of the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach which comprise the largest container seaport complex in the United States, and fifth largest in the world.

Last year, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach moved an astounding 15.7 million TEUs, or twenty-foot equivalent units, representing an 11% increase over the previous year, and continuing an impressive sustained growth for American seaports.

Together, these two mega-seaports handle approximately 45 percent of the containerized consumer goods imported into the United States annually, registering 260 billion dollars in economic impact, 28 billion dollars in state and local revenue and 3.3 million jobs nationwide. In Southern California alone, the allied maritime and goods movement industries have created more than 500,000 permanent jobs and remain poised to generate even more middle-class jobs for our communities.

While the growth of the Ports has outpaced all projections over the past 25 years, our current forecasts predict a tripling of current container cargo volumes over the next 25 years, especially from our Pacific Rim trading partners.

Against this backdrop, and the current levels of harmful air pollution in the Los Angeles region, I have promoted the principle of “green growth.” Put simply, we must address the harmful environmental and health effects of trade activity as we facilitate trade growth—and the jobs and economic opportunity it brings.

With that, our challenge—that of the two ports and the cities of Los Angeles and Long Beach—is to effectively accommodate the burgeoning growth of our seaports while, at the same time, reducing the burden on the environment and public health.

Following an unprecedented collaboration between the two ports and local, state and federal agencies, including the South Coast Air Quality

Management District (SCAQMD), the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and Region 9 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and extensive research, study and discussion, the Boards of Harbor Commissioners for the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach unanimously adopted the San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan (CAAP) last November.

The Clean Air Action Plan is a five-year plan designed to develop air pollution mitigation standards and incentive programs necessary to reduce harmful air emissions, thereby making vast improvements to the air quality and creating a healthier environment for all our citizens, while allowing port development to continue apace. It is a starting point, and will be continually subject to review and modification on an annual basis.

The Clean Air Action Plan is the first endeavor of its kind in the country, stands as a model of public/private collaboration for other ports, and provides a framework for environmental improvements that work hand-in-hand with the future growth of the ports.

Over the next five years, the CAAP will address the five sources of port-related air pollution:

1. Heavy-duty vehicles—trucks—that operate at the ports;
2. Cargo-handling equipment engine standards;
3. Harbor craft engine standards;
4. Railroad locomotives using clean alternative fuels and cleaner engines;

5. Container ships and other ocean-going vessels calling at the Ports through speed reduction standards, low sulfur fuel use and cold-ironing.

The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach have made significant strides in advancing this landmark plan. On July 11, together with my friend Mayor Bob Foster of Long Beach, we commissioned 16 clean locomotives that were purchased with funds from both ports, Pacific Harbor Lines and the Carl Moyer Program. Switching to these cleaner locomotives will result in a 53% reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions and a 45% reduction in particulate matter emissions per locomotive—that equates to removal of an estimated 163 tons of nitrogen oxide and 3 tons of particulate matter each year! The new locomotives use 30% less fuel, reducing greenhouse gases.

Later this year, the San Pedro Bay Ports' Clean Truck Program will begin the process of retrofitting and replacing older dirty diesel port trucks that emit high levels of particulate matter and greenhouse gases with cleaner fuel and alternative fuel trucks that will further reduce health risks to our citizens.

Another component of the CAAP sets forth innovative approaches for reducing emissions from ocean-going vessels. This includes “cold ironing,” whereby ships at berth switch off their diesel engines and plug into shoreside electrical power. Alternative technologies will be available to container ships unable to utilize the “cold-ironing” shoreside-power model.

We are also working in partnership with environmental leaders in the business community. In May 2006, Maersk Lines – the largest container carrier in the world – announced they would convert all of their ships to using low sulfur fuel – that is, 0.2 percent sulfur diesel – in the main and auxiliary engines 20 miles out of Port.

Through the CAAP and with the participation of the business community, we hope to make significant gains in the reduction of emissions from marine vessels. But, more can be done.

The “Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act” is landmark federal legislation and I applaud you, Senator Boxer, as well as Senator Feinstein and Congresswomen Hilda Solis and Jane Harman, for your collaboration in crafting this important measure.

I believe the Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act and the San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan will work in concert to effectively reduce air pollution from seaports and mitigate the serious threats to our environment and public health.

As federal law, the Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act will have the reach that the CAAP does not. Your measure will have the power to regulate foreign-flagged vessels that are currently unregulated and represent the main source of air pollution at the San Pedro Bay ports. Foreign-flag vessels, including container ships, tankers and cruise ships, emit more than 90 percent of all pollution from ocean-going vessels.

I understand that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be the lead agency responsible for the regulation and the enforcement of the new

emissions standards. And, because Region 9 of the United States EPA participated in the development of the CAAP and continues to be an important member of this historic partnership, I believe that your legislation and the Clean Air Action Plan will work in tandem.

In closing, Senator Boxer and members of the Committee, once again I would like to express my strong support for your legislation and my commitment to helping you see it through to final passage and enactment. The economic potential of the San Pedro Bay Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach is well demonstrated and will continue, but hand-in-hand with these new environmental standards and initiatives that will enable the ports to “grow green.”

These are complex environmental and economic challenges, but challenges that, in my opinion, offer an opportunity for us to expand our current boundaries and embrace a new way of thinking and doing by embracing the principles of the Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act and the San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan.

I appreciate your holding this important field hearing here at the Port of Los Angeles. We here in the Los Angeles area look forward to working with you and the Committee on Environment and Public Works to see this legislation through to completion.

Thank you, again.

###