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The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is responsible for ensuring clean air in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), including Orange County and the non-desert portion of Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has one seat on the thirteen-person SCAQMD board.

Air quality in the Basin has significantly improved over the last half-century, yet we still experience some of the worst air pollution in the nation, significantly exceeding federal public health standards for both ozone (primarily formed by NOx) and particulate matter (PM2.5). Ozone is the main contributor to smog, which persists in the Basin. The poor air quality in the Basin contributes to the region's higher incidence of lung cancer, asthma, coronary heart disease and hypertension. Vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly and pregnant women, are particularly at risk for these and other health impacts.

In late June of 2016, the SCAQMD staff released a draft Air Quality Management

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Plan (AQMP) for public comment and review. The AQMP is the regional blueprint for achieving air quality standards in the Basin. The draft AQMP focuses largely on achieving critical reductions in air pollution through “incentives that encourage the accelerated transition of vehicles, buildings, and industrial facilities to cleaner technologies in a manner that benefits not only air quality, but also the local businesses and the regional economy.” (AQMP, ES-1) Because emissions from mobile sources (i.e., cars, trucks, airplanes, boats, and rail) account for approximately 88% of the region’s NOx emissions, the focus on mobile sources is critical to reducing these emissions. However, because the California Air Resources Board maintains primary statewide regulatory authority over mobile sources, rather than SCAQMD, the role SCAQMD can play in regulating mobile sources is somewhat limited.

The AQMP proposes moving away from regulatory approaches and instead relies heavily on providing financial incentives to polluters to meet the AQMP’s air pollution reductions. Largely, the financial incentives would be used to implement a regional transition to zero and near-zero emission technologies in the mobile source sector, including clean cars, buses, and trucks.

The AQMP predicts that the SCAQMD will need to secure approximately \$11-14 billion over a seven to fifteen year period to pay for the clean vehicle incentives. None of this funding has yet been secured, and securing the approximately \$1 billion a year in required funding from the federal and state governments to provide these financial incentives is by no means a sure bet.

The AQMP proposes developing an action plan “as part of the AQMP public adoption process to identify the necessary actions by the District, the region, the state,

the federal government, and other partnerships to ensure the requisite levels of funding are secured as early as possible and sustained through 2031.” (AQMP, ES-8) In short, the AQMP proposes providing significant financial incentives to polluters to clean up their fleets, from funding that does not yet exist. Should the funding fail to materialize, the AQMP offers no meaningful back up plan, instead focusing on technicalities in the federal Clean Air Act that provide legal cover (see AQMP, 4-44 to 4-45) for continuing to fall short of air pollution reduction goals. In the meantime, the Basin’s residents would remain captive to the region’s poor air quality, and the associated negative health impacts. Taking this gamble poses an unacceptable level of risk to Los Angeles County residents, particularly those who are our most vulnerable.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors, in collaboration with County Counsel and the Department of Public Health, send a comment letter to the SCAQMD strongly urging them to work with the necessary state and federal agencies to adopt an Air Quality Management Plan that will meaningfully improve air quality and public health with regulatory control measures that are achievable using available or known resources instead of adopting the current proposal that predominantly relies on securing billions of dollars in funding that currently does not exist.

S:KY/SCAQMD