



June 1, 2017



20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

The Honorable Roy Cooper, Governor
North Carolina Office of the Governor

Dear Governor Cooper,

We are most appreciative of the work that you have done over the years to improve North Carolina's air quality, and stand behind you in continuing this effort.

Funds allocated to North Carolina from the Volkswagen Settlement offer a great opportunity to maintain our improved air quality and fight climate change in our state. The American Lung Association's 2017 State of the Air Report confirms improving trends in air quality for our state due in great part to the Clean Air Act and North Carolina's 2002 Clean Smokestacks Act. Yet, it has taken years to get to this point; the VW settlement offers a chance to keep North Carolina moving forward towards clean air solutions in the face of major budget cuts threatening the Environmental Protection Agency and federal legislation aimed at weakening the Clean Air Act.

As you know, air pollution is a public health concern first and foremost. "Air pollution is a threat to the health of children and adults," said David Peden, MD, UNC specialist in both pediatrics and environmental medicine and lung biology who also serves as the current President of the American Academy of Asthma, Allergy & Immunology. "Children face special risks from air pollution because their lungs are growing and because they are so active when out of doors. Others at risk include the elderly, those who work or exercise outdoors, people with existing lung diseases, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (also known as COPD, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis), and people with cardiovascular disease."

Mothers & Others for Clean Air and the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy support use of these funds to reduce toxic diesel emissions and help to expand the infrastructure for electric vehicle use. These steps are essential to maintaining our current improvements and advancing air quality as our state continues to face rapid growth and transportation challenges. Your appointment of Michael Regan as Secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality assures that the expertise is in place, and the resources exist to make this happen with your designation of the VW trust funds to this agency.

Also, we ask that the state ensure a transparent and open process for stakeholder engagement in development of the state's plan for use of the VW funds. We are grateful for your outstanding leadership in the past as now in your most important role to date. Thank you for all that you do for the citizens of this state.

Sincerely

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