

**Statement of the
Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management
on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Consideration
of the Request for Waiver of Federal Preemption
for California State Motor Vehicle Pollution Control Standards**

**May 30, 2007
Sacramento, California**

Good morning. My name is Eric Skelton and I am here today representing the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM). NESCAUM is an association of state air quality agencies in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. California's December 21, 2005 waiver submittal provides a solid demonstration that its greenhouse gas emission standards meet relevant waiver criteria. NESCAUM and its member states therefore strongly support California's effort to move forward with its standards and we ask EPA to expeditiously approve the California waiver request.

Approximately 25 percent of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions in the NESCAUM region come from passenger cars and light-duty trucks. In recognition of this, seven of the eight NESCAUM states have exercised their option under Section 177 of the Clean Air Act to adopt the California motor vehicle greenhouse gas emission standards. When the Northeast states implement these standards beginning with motor vehicle model year 2009, we project that they will reduce 27 million tons of greenhouse gases annually in 2020, and 39 million tons in 2030. This equates to an 18 percent reduction in motor vehicle greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 and a 24 percent reduction in 2030 for our region.

The California program is a key linchpin in our other regional efforts as well. In order to address greenhouse gas emissions from the region, the New England governors have committed to reductions as part of the New England Governors'/Eastern Canadian

Premiers' Climate Action Plan adopted in 2001. The goals of the plan are to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions at 1990 levels by 2010, and to achieve more significant reductions over the long term. New Jersey's economy-wide greenhouse gas reduction legislation sets similar goals. New York has spearheaded a regional initiative to reduce global warming emissions from large power plants. Given the transportation sector's contribution to the greenhouse gas inventory, achieving the region's climate goals will require effective means to address the motor vehicle component.

The need for action is no longer in dispute, as again confirmed recently by the world's scientists. I would refer you to the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. In terms of the specific risks of climate change for the northeast states, a study funded by the federal U.S. Global Change Research Program noted that global warming at the higher end of the projections would raise the average year-round temperature in Boston to a level currently measured in Atlanta, GA. Associated impacts on the region could include more frequent and intense storms; increased damage in coastal areas from flooding; reduced revenue from traditional New England industries such as maple syrup and skiing, as well as a variety of stresses on fishing grounds, forests, and coastal ecosystems. We believe that mounting scientific evidence of the impacts of global warming necessitate immediate action to reverse the growth of greenhouse gas emissions from every sector, including transportation, as part of a comprehensive state-led effort to combat global warming.

To assist the northeast states in developing a viable strategy to reduce motor vehicle greenhouse gases, NESCAUM's sister organization – NESCCAF, which stands for Northeast States Center for a Clean Air Future – conducted the most comprehensive study to date to assess the feasibility and costs associated with introduction of technologies to reduce greenhouse gasses from passenger cars. The NESCCAF study team – which included contractors that work regularly with the automobile industry –

used state-of-the-art computer modeling to evaluate 75 different technology packages on five vehicle types. The study team also conducted a comprehensive cost analysis on the technologies evaluated. The study found that cost effective technologies exist to reduce motor vehicle greenhouse gas emissions for a range of reductions of up to 55 percent. The study was designed to replicate a program that met the California greenhouse gas regulation requirements and restrictions.

The NESCCAF study found that technologies currently in production such as improved air conditioning, variable valve timing and lift, 6-speed automatic transmissions, and cylinder deactivation can be used to reduce motor vehicle greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent. Much greater reductions - of up to 55 percent - can be achieved through the use of more advanced technologies such as stoichiometric gasoline direct injection, hybrid electric, and diesel vehicles. Two-thirds of the technologies evaluated in the analysis are already in high volume production – defined as over 500,000 units manufactured per year.

Examples of vehicles that are available today with these technologies include GM Tahoe, Suburban, Silverado and other models with cylinder deactivation, Honda Accord, Ridgeline, Fit and other models with variable valve timing, and the turbocharged Volvo S60. Recent high gasoline prices and the associated high costs of operating vehicles have spurred automobile manufacturers to introduce some of these technologies at no additional cost to consumers. Other cars, SUVs, and trucks are being planned that will include these and other technologies.

The recent Supreme Court decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA* further supports the position, in three important ways, that California's waiver request should be granted expeditiously. First, the Court determined that greenhouse gases fit well within the Clean Air Act's capacious definition of air pollutant. Second, the Court found unpersuasive EPA's argument that California's regulation of motor vehicle greenhouse

gases would require it to tighten mileage standards. Third, the Court declared that EPA's steadfast refusal to regulate greenhouse gas emissions presented a risk of harm, both actual and imminent.

As you know, on May 14, President Bush directed EPA and the Departments of Transportation, Energy, and Agriculture to take *first steps* toward regulations to reduce gasoline consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles, using the President's 20-in-10 plan as a starting point. The President set a target date of the end of 2008 for completion of this process. Under this approach, the earliest the federal government is likely even to be in the proposal stage for motor vehicle greenhouse gas standards is well after the 2009 model year when the first low carbon California vehicles enter the market. Clearly, the California program on the way now will achieve significant public health and welfare benefits many years earlier than a prospective federal program.

While we are pleased that EPA has now initiated the comment period and is holding this public hearing on California's request, we are mindful that California submitted its request over 15 months ago. We are now hopeful that a positive decision is finally forthcoming from EPA. However, in light of the significant time that has already passed without constructive steps taken, we strongly urge EPA to take final agency action on the greenhouse gas waiver request for passenger vehicles.

Thank you.