

April 6, 2009

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EPA West (Air Docket)
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Room B108
Mail Code 6102T
Washington, D.C. 20460

Re: Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2006-0173

Dear Docket:

The Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) is pleased to submit the following comments on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Reconsideration of the Request for Waiver of Federal Preemption for California State Motor Vehicle Pollution Control Standards. NESCAUM is an association of state air quality agencies in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. NESCAUM on behalf of its member states strongly supports California's waiver submittal. The submittal provided a solid demonstration that California's greenhouse gas emission standards meet relevant waiver criteria and accordingly we ask EPA to expeditiously reconsider and approve the California waiver request.

The Northeast states have over 15 years experience in implementing the California motor vehicle standards. Recently, manufacturers have raised issues they say are impediments to implementing the program and have alleged that program compliance is very difficult. But during the many years of complying with the California program in the Northeast, manufacturers have met the program requirements without any violations and have also met the needs of Northeast consumers. Moreover, states in the region have had an ongoing dialogue with the industry about issues of concern and we continue to do so – recently with regard to regional

compliance. We expect to continue to work together to find solutions, and our real-world experience for over 15 years directly contradicts claims that the program is onerous.

As EPA stated in its endangerment analysis “warming of the climate system is now unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level.”¹ If we are to stabilize the earth’s climate at a 2.0 to 2.4 C global average temperature increase over today’s average temperature, we are faced with the need to reduce 80 percent of GHG emissions by 2050.² Deep reductions will need to be made across all sectors. These reductions must be achieved from today’s emissions levels, and must be over and above increases that result from growth in vehicle fleets and mile traveled. Given the enormity of this task, we cannot afford to leave on the table any potentially available GHG reductions.

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. We project the standards will result in an 18 percent reduction in motor vehicle greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 and a 24 percent reduction in 2030 for our region. The standards represent near term and substantial reductions in motor vehicle greenhouse gas emissions.

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 a comprehensive study in 2004 to assess the feasibility and costs associated with introduction of technologies to reduce greenhouse gasses from passenger cars.

¹ EPA. Technical Support Document for Endangerment Analysis for Greenhouse Gas Emissions under the Clean Air Act, Sixth Order Draft (June 21, 2008) at 21; citing IPCC, Summary for Policymakers. In: *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Solomon, et al.] Cambridge University Press, 2007

² IPCC, *Climate Change 2007 Synthesis Report*, November, 2007

The NESCCAF study found that technologies currently in production 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 gasoline direct injection, hybrid electric, and diesel vehicles.

Recent announcements by automobile manufacturers underscore the fact that the technologies needed to meet the greenhouse gas standards are here today. For example, in 2007, Renault announced it would introduce stop start technology – which reduces engine idling - in all its European models between 2009 and 2010. Already available today are the GM Tahoe, Suburban, Silverado and other models with cylinder deactivation – which allows the engine to run on fewer cylinders at times when less power is needed. Two other approaches – variable valve timing and turbocharging – allow engine operating characteristics to more closely match the power needed at any given time. The Honda Accord, Ridgeline, and the Fit and other models are available with variable valve timing. These are just a few examples, there are many others. 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. This demonstrates that the California GHG standards are technically feasible, and in fact will result in the types of cars and technologies that the American consumer wants.

A number of companies, including GM, Ford, Toyota, Chrysler, and Nissan have announced the production of advanced technology vehicles – such as plug-in electric hybrid and battery electric vehicles that achieve much greater reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

We commend EPA for its reconsideration of the denial of the California waiver request. We are now hopeful that a positive decision will be forthcoming from EPA. We stand ready to assist the Agency in its efforts to take action to approve the waiver.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arthur N. Marin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Arthur" being the most prominent.

Arthur N. Marin
Executive Director