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Assembly California Legislature

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AB 476 – Vehicle Weight Classification (*Introduced*)

PURPOSE

Assembly Bill (AB) 476 seeks to update the 41-year old definition of a heavy-duty vehicle in California statute.

BACKGROUND

Under *AB 32 (Nunez), Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006*, the use of market-based technologies were recognized as a key mechanism for ensuring the adoption of the latest technologies across the public and private sector that would support the advancement of the state’s greenhouse gas reduction and air quality improvement goals.

California has signed into law various bills, such as *SB 1275 (De León), Chapter 530, Statutes of 2014*, and *SB 1204 (Lara), Chapter 524, Statutes of 2014*, that have specifically targeted certain classes/types of vehicles. By ensuring that our definitions in state law match our legislative intent, we can more effectively help California reach its ambitious climate goals.

Despite progress in cleaner fuels and emission standards, diesel engines in heavy-duty trucks remain one of the largest sources of fine particulate matter. Particulate matter are the air pollutants that can cause short-term health effects such as eye, nose, throat and lung irritation. Exposure to fine particles can also affect lung function and worsen medical conditions such as asthma and heart disease. These pollutants are particularly prevalent in communities that exist alongside major transportation corridors.

Given these factors, it is critical that the state’s investment in “heavy-duty” truck technology is specifically targeted to trucks that represent the

greatest concern as far as pollution and present the highest return on investment in meeting our goals for air quality and emissions improvement.

EXISTING LAW

Current law provides for the establishment of a two-tiered weight classification structure focused on heavy-duty and light-duty trucks. *Health and Safety Code, Section 39033 and 39035* outlines the following:

1. “Heavy-duty” means having a manufacturer’s maximum gross vehicle weight rating of 6,001 or more pounds; and
2. “Light-duty” means having a manufacturer’s maximum gross vehicle weight rating of under 6,001 pounds.

SUMMARY

AB 476 seeks to establish a three-tiered weight classification structure as follows:

1. “Heavy-duty” means having a manufacturer’s maximum gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds; and
2. “Medium-duty” means having a manufacturer’s maximum gross vehicle weight rating between 10,001 and 26,000 pounds; and
3. “Light-duty” means having manufacturer’s maximum gross vehicle weight rating of under 10,001 pounds.

SPONSOR

- California Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition

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