

**CALIFORNIA INSPECTION & MAINTENANCE
REVIEW COMMITTEE**

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**CITIZEN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE SUBMITS SMOG CHECK AND AIR QUALITY
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE**

Today the California Inspection and Maintenance Review Committee ("IMRC") released its review of California's vehicle Smog Check Program and recommended program improvements to Governor Schwarzenegger and the State Legislature.

California's Smog Check Program ("Program") is designed to ensure that vehicle emissions equipment is maintained in good working order to reduce hydrocarbons ("HC") and oxides of nitrogen ("NOx") from the gasoline-powered vehicle fleet, both automobiles and light duty trucks. It is an important part of the state's strategy for reducing harmful ground level ozone to levels considered safe by state and federal health standards. The Program, in place since 1984, requires a biennial Smog Check inspection for most gasoline-powered vehicles in most parts of California.

The Program is credited with removing a combined 370 tons per day of HC and NOx pollutants from California's air and is acknowledged to be among the most cost-effective and successful initiatives to combat air pollution. Yet, the federal government has required California to further improve air quality, and the on-road automobile and truck fleet remains the biggest source of pollutants.

The Committee's recommendations, if implemented, assist the state in meeting the clean air goals set forth in the State Implementation Plan. The recommendations include:

- Requiring annual Smog Check inspections on vehicles currently subject to the program which are fifteen years or older as well as high mileage vehicles (those driven each year much more than most vehicles) because these vehicles tend to be higher emitters of pollution than the rest of the fleet;
- Requiring identification and repair of vehicles found to be smoking during Smog Check inspections. The current Smog Check program does not provide for this test; and,
- Providing more funding for the state's low-income consumer repair assistance program.

"The Smog Check Program is an essential tool to improving air quality in California. The Committee's recommendations will make the Program more effective, consumer friendly and will improve the air we breathe," stated Victor Weisser, IMRC Chair and President of the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance.

In 2004, the Legislature adopted the IMRC's previous proposal to eliminate the 30-Year rolling exemption from the Program and replace it with an exemption for pre-1976 model year vehicles (AB2683 stats. 2004 chap. 704, §1).

The ten-member IMRC, made up of industry, environmental non-profit and public agency representatives, issued its recommendations after months of deliberations and public meetings involving numerous stakeholders. Pursuant to California law, the IMRC is charged with reviewing California's Smog Check Program and recommending Program improvements. The California Bureau of Automotive Repair and the California Air Resources Board are responsible for the Program.

IMRC Chair Weisser further emphasized that: "As California grows, we must continue to find cost-effective ways to improve our air quality. The Committee's proposals accomplish this goal and are the product of collaboration, resulting from stakeholder input, agency expertise and citizen oversight."

A full copy of the IMRC's "Review of the Smog Check Program 2004" is available at www.imreview.ca.gov or by calling the IMRC at (916) 322-8181.