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**Testimony of  
Alexandra Desautels, MSW, Policy Analyst, Alameda County Public Health Department  
Before Port Commission**

**Clean Trucks Management Program Accelerated Timeline**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2009**

Good afternoon. My name is Alexandra Desautels, Policy Analyst for the Alameda County Department of Public Health. I am here today to ask that you treat the public health crisis facing your neighboring community and truck drivers with the urgency it deserves by accelerating your timetable for a vote on the clean trucks management program.

**SOOT KILLS** and we have known this since the industrial revolution. Soot and other environmental risk factors are playing a central role in robbing WO residents of over a decade of life. Today in WO people are **living up to 14 years shorter lives**, than other Oakland residents. The contribution of filthy air to this early death is **UNNECESSARY AND PREVENTABLE**.

A study conducted by the California Air Resources Board found that:

- West Oakland residents are exposed to **3 times** more Diesel Particulate Matter than the rest of the Bay Area
- West Oakland residents experience 2.5 times greater lifetime risk of cancer than Bay Area residents in general and **80% of this excess cancer risk is attributed to diesel trucks**.

- ACPHD research found that West Oakland residents have the highest rates of asthma hospitalization in the county – **2.3 times** the average – and West Oakland children under five years of age have emergency department visits rates nearly **three times** the county average

The dirty trucking system harms truck drivers as well. The new report released by Pacific Institute and EBASE, reveals that due in large part to their non-employee status, a majority of drivers and their family members therefore go without medical coverage, resulting in an overuse of emergency services and hospitalizations paid for disproportionately by tax payers. Taking a Toll estimates the health, environmental and worker costs of the current Port trucking system at \$153 million/year.

Recent studies confirm that air pollution is more harmful to human health than previously thought and that improvements in air quality have been shown to increase length of life. The Port Board of Commissioners demonstrated great leadership and commitment to air quality improvement by adopting a goal of 85% reduction in health risks by 2020. Developing a concrete plan of action, including the development of a Clean Trucks Program, is critical to achieving this goal. We ask that the Port, particularly during this time of economic slowdown, show leadership and a strong commitment to reducing the health risk associated with poor air quality by taking **swift action** on the Clean Trucks Management Program.

The health of our children and truck drivers can not wait.