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Contact: Bill Becker

202-624-

7864

**State and Local Clean Air Officials Welcome
NRC Decision Not to Recommend Restricting States' Rights**

State and local clean air officials are welcoming a final report from a National Research Council (NRC) committee charged with reviewing states' authorities to set their own motor vehicle standards. After a lengthy and comprehensive review of states' mobile source standard-setting practices, the NRC committee decided not to yield to pressure from special interests that had urged the committee to recommend curtailing these important states' rights.

"We are pleased that the NRC committee did not recommend any changes – legislative or regulatory – to restrict the ability of states to adopt California's motor vehicle standards. It is responsible public policy to maintain the rights of states without imposing additional hurdles," said S. William Becker, Executive Director of the State and Territorial Air Pollution Program Administrators (STAPPA) and the Association of Local Air Pollution Control Officials (ALAPCO).

In testimony that STAPPA and ALAPCO were invited to present to the NRC committee at its first meeting in June 2004, and in subsequent correspondence with the committee, the associations explained that despite significant achievements in cleaning up the air, states and localities continue to face complex challenges: many millions of citizens still breathe air with harmful levels of pollutants, tens of thousands of people die prematurely each year and new environmental dilemmas are emerging, including toxic air contaminants and global warming. Mobile sources of pollution play a major role in all of these, as well as other, serious environmental and public health challenges.

"Over 150 million people live in areas of the country where air quality violates new, health-based standards for smog and soot and causes serious health and welfare impacts," said John Paul, President of ALAPCO and Supervisor of the Regional Air Pollution Control Agency in Dayton, Ohio. "Removing or restricting existing authorities

would thwart the ability of states and localities to fulfill their public health obligations,” he explained.

“Although mobile source standard-setting authorities have been available for many years, history has demonstrated that states have used them very judiciously and only after meticulous analysis,” noted Eddie Terrill, President of STAPPA and Director of the Oklahoma Air Quality Division.

“As we face the ever-increasing public health challenges associated with air quality, it is essential that we preserve and support these and every other every tool available to confront these challenges head on, now and in the future,” he continued.

STAPPA and ALAPCO are the two national associations of air pollution control agencies in 54 states and territories and more than 165 major metropolitan areas across the country. For more information on the associations, please visit www.4cleanair.org.

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