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May 7, 2025

The Honorable Melissa Hurtado
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Room 6510
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill (SB) 496 (Hurtado) Advanced Clean Fleets.
Notice of Support – Orange County Sanitation District**

Dear Senator Hurtado,

I write to you today on behalf of the Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) to express my support for SB 496 (Hurtado). This bill would create an Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) Appeals Advisory Committee, ensure disaster service workers are able to effectively respond to emergency situations, and provide needed and common-sense reforms for compliance.

OC San has been working diligently to reduce the carbon intensity of fleet operations while ensuring that we continue to provide the many critical services our communities rely upon for their most essential daily needs.

The ACF regulation has established ambitious and often impractical compliance deadlines for fleets to transition to Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs). The ACF's ZEV transition requires access to adequate utility infrastructure for alternative fueling, such as EV charging, as well as access to ZEVs that are capable of providing a comprehensive range of essential and specialized services offered by fleets, many of which are vital for the health and safety of Californians. While the ACF allows fleets to seek exemptions in cases where fleets cannot meet the compliance timetables, it lacks clarity regarding the evaluation and determination process for these exemption requests. Additionally, it does not outline a procedure for the administrative review of denied exemption requests by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

SB 496 establishes an Appeals Advisory Committee by which local agencies may request a review of exemption request denials. Allowing a formal appeals process ensures transparency while protecting due process for those seeking further review.

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Additionally, SB 496 would update the emergency vehicle exemption, allowing those vehicles that respond to and support critical operations related to emergencies and disasters, often under difficult or harsh conditions, to continue to protect our communities. Also, SB 496 modifies the requirements of the daily usage exemption, removing barriers for the applicant to comply with the mandate.

SB 496 would create much-needed improvements to the ACF while protecting the health and safety of Californians, avoid unnecessary costs detrimental to our shared long-term goals, and ensure that local agencies can continue to work diligently to decarbonize their fleet operations and comply with the ACF without being penalized for factors beyond their control.

For these reasons, OC San supports SB 496. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Cabral, Director of Communications, at (714) 593-7581 or via email at JCabral@ocsan.gov.

Sincerely,

Ryan P. Gallagher
Board Chairman