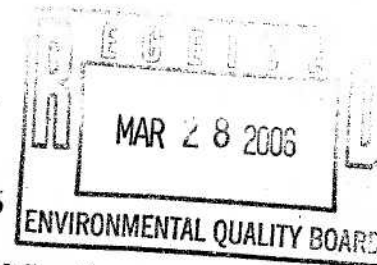


Testimony of the Center for the Celebration of Creation
Presented by Mary Trayes

Clean Vehicles Hearing, Delaware County, March 28, 2006



My name is Mary Trayes, and I'm with the Center for the Celebration of Creation. The Center was founded in 1990 as part of Chestnut Hill United Methodist Church in Philadelphia. Our work includes advocating on behalf of the faith community on matters of ecological justice, pressing for better policy and legislation at the federal, state, and local levels.

The Center for the Celebration of Creation fully supports the changes proposed by the Department of Environmental Protection to the Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles Program, and supports full implementation of this program as suggested by the DEP.

God tells us in Psalm 24 that the world, and everything in it, belong to God. We've been given the sacred gift of life on earth and its precious and finite resources – we must use these irreplaceable gifts responsibly and respectfully.

Driving has become a way of life, even a requirement, for most Americans. Because governments subsidize roadways much more heavily than public transit, we simply can't get to all the places we need to be by public transit, bicycle, or on foot. But when we get in the car and start the engine, our love for God requires us to understand the implications of driving so many miles each year.

Our tailpipe emissions cause smog that triggers asthma attacks and other diseases. According to the American Lung Association, one million Pennsylvanians have respiratory ailments that result from and are worsened by air pollution. We must remind ourselves constantly who is at highest risk from these ailments. The uncomfortable answer is that the elderly, the sick, the very young, and the old are at most risk – those who are least able to take care of themselves and with the weakest voice in the political process. It is on their behalf we testify today.

Pennsylvania must also make significant progress on reducing our contribution to global warming, now more than ever with the complete lack of federal leadership on this critical problem. Research shows that our Clean Vehicles Program, once fully implemented, could result in up to 30 percent reduction in global warming pollution.

Federal standards on tailpipe emissions don't go far enough to improve Pennsylvania's air. The Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles Program, and the changes proposed to it by DEP, will do far more to protect our health than relying on the federal standards.

Let us honor the Creator, the sacred gift of creation, and human life. Let's implement DEP's proposed changes to the Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles Program and the full program itself. Thank you.

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