



May 20, 2025

The Honorable Buffy Wicks  
Chair, Committee on Appropriations  
California State Assembly  
1021 O Street, Room 8220  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 605 (Muratsuchi): Lower Emissions Cargo Handling Equipment  
OPPOSE - As Amended April 10, 2025  
Referred to Assembly Committee on Appropriations**

The undersigned organizations respectfully oppose Assembly Bill 605 (Muratsuchi), which seeks to lock in hydrogen combustion cargo handling equipment (CHE) and prevent the California Air Resources Board (CARB) from requiring the retirement of this equipment in future regulations. AB605's proposed pilot program would divert investments away from zero-emissions technologies and infrastructure and set back California's progress in deploying zero-emission cargo handling equipment.

Seven years ago, CARB identified the need to develop a [Zero-Emissions Cargo Handling Equipment Regulation](#) to reduce health risks to communities living near seaports and railyards and to achieve further emission reductions necessary to attain state and federal air quality standards. AB605 undermines this recommendation and seeks to incentivize near-term purchases of hydrogen combustion CHE, jeopardizing the significant progress California ports have made towards zero-emissions technologies and infrastructure.

While the bill frames these as "bridge" technologies, incentivizing the purchase of this CHE is not necessary, or even viable. For example, hydrogen internal combustion (H2ICE) CHE are not a proven technology that would bring meaningful near-term emission reductions. Battery-electric yard tractors, top handlers, high-capacity forklifts, and both grid-electric and battery-electric rubber-tired gantry cranes are all commercially available.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the San Pedro Bay Ports have not evaluated H2ICE CHE as an option in their feasibility assessments. By contrast, zero-emissions cargo handling equipment are already being deployed at California ports.

As of 2023, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach had 105 pieces of zero-emission CHE in operation.<sup>2</sup> Battery-electric yard tractors, top handlers, high-capacity forklifts, and both grid-

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<sup>1</sup> *Id.*

<sup>2</sup> San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan Stakeholder Meeting, 2024 Cargo Handling Equipment Feasibility Assessment Presentation, <https://cleanairactionplan.org/download/255/4-2/5334/stakeholder-meeting-presentation-4-2-25.pdf>.

electric and battery-electric rubber-tired gantry cranes are all commercially available.<sup>3</sup> In addition, last year, the Port of Los Angeles was awarded a [\\$412 million grant](#) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Ports Program to support electrification of port operations, including the purchase of over 400 pieces of battery-electric, human-operated ZE CHE. At the Port of Oakland, terminal operators intend to convert nearly half of the CHE operating at the Port to battery-electric.<sup>4</sup> This ZE transition is essential for protecting the health of our portside communities. Communities living near the Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Oakland are exposed to higher concentrations of health-harming pollution, including cancer-causing diesel particulate matter, compared to the rest of the state. Life expectancy for Black residents in Long Beach is up to eight years shorter than the Los Angeles County average, and the average lifespan in West Oakland is 6.6 years shorter than that of communities living farther away from the Port of Oakland.<sup>5</sup>

We agree with the need to incentivize a shift to clean, human-operated CHE, but this intent must be paired with a bill that furthers, not derails, the transition to true ZE CHE at California ports. While we hope to work with the author to address these concerns, the bill as currently proposed hampers California's progress and we request your "NO" vote on AB605.

Sincerely,

*Regina Hsu*  
Senior Attorney  
Earthjustice

*Michele Canales*  
Western States Policy Advocate  
Union of Concerned Scientists

*Jakob Evans*  
Policy Strategist  
Sierra Club California

*Ellie Cohen*  
CEO  
The Climate Center

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<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Earthjustice, Port of Oakland's All-Electric Future is in Reach, <https://earthjustice.org/experts/katrina-tomas/port-of-oaklands-all-electric-future-is-in-reach>.

<sup>5</sup> City of Long Beach Dept. of Health & Human Services, 2019 Community Health Assessment, <https://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/health/media-library/documents/healthy-living/community/community-health-assessment>; Air Pollution Risk & Vulnerability to Health Impacts: A Look at West Oakland, [https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2018-03/capp\\_consultation\\_group\\_march\\_2018\\_alameda\\_county\\_health\\_presentation.pdf](https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2018-03/capp_consultation_group_march_2018_alameda_county_health_presentation.pdf).