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Pennsylvania MEDICAL SOCIETY®

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January 30, 2008

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Arleen Shulman, Chief
Mobile Sources Section
P.O. Box 8468
Rachel Carson State Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8464

Dear Ms. Shulman:

The Pennsylvania Medical Society supports the proposed statewide idling reduction regulation published for comment in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on January 12, 2008. Our organization supports the regulation because it is a reasonable step forward in protecting the health of our patients.

Two interesting reports were issued within the last month, and I believe these reports demonstrate why the Pennsylvania Medical Society is interested in seeing the proposed regulation succeed.

First, a new academic study, led by UCLA and published online January 17, 2008, in the journal *Circulation Research*, sheds light on the danger of emissions. According to the findings, the smallest emissions particles may be the most damaging components of air pollution in triggering plaque buildup in arteries. This can lead to heart attack and stroke.

In a nutshell, the scientists involved in the study say that pollutant particles promote hardening of the arteries by inactivating the protective qualities of "good" cholesterol (high density lipoprotein).

This study was funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition to scientists from UCLA, other research members came from USC, Michigan State, and California-Irvine.

One researcher involved in the study said that the consequences of air pollution on cardiovascular health may be similar to the hazards of secondhand smoke.

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In addition, the UCLA research team had reported earlier that "diesel exhaust particles interact with artery-clogging fats in low-density lipoprotein cholesterol to activate genes that cause the blood-vessel inflammation that can lead to heart disease."

Heart disease is a major concern of the Pennsylvania Medical Society that comes to light with regard to this issue. And, a second recent study helps to demonstrate why we are so concerned.

This report comes from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). On January 24, 2008, the AHRQ released a report claiming the cost of the 10 most expensive health conditions is about \$500 billion.

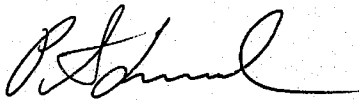
As you are aware, Governor Rendell has placed great emphasis on making health insurance more affordable to assist the nearly 800,000 Pennsylvanians without insurance. Part of his agenda in doing so includes addressing issues related to chronic diseases such as heart disease.

If the Governor can be successful in avoiding chronic diseases, consumers shouldn't need as many health care services, which in return helps to lower the cost of health insurance that all of us pay.

A reasonable and logical step in addressing some of the issues related to heart disease would be to tackle the issue of diesel exhaust. By cleaning the air, we may be helping Pennsylvanians avoid heart attacks that can easily rack up medical bills for necessary procedures within the recovery process ... if there is a recovery.

The Pennsylvania Medical Society supports the proposed rule to amend Chapter 126 as published in the January 12, 2008, edition of the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* and we thank you for taking our views into consideration. For the health of our patients, this is a good step forward.

Sincerely,



Peter S. Lund, MD
President, Pennsylvania Medical Society
Founder, Institute for Good Medicine

Cc: Independent Regulatory Review Commission