

# Global warming ballot initiative: Teamsters and cities weigh in

**Margot Roosevelt, Los Angeles Times, 4-24-10**

The California Teamsters, one of the state's most powerful unions, Friday joined opponents of a proposed ballot initiative to delay enforcement of the Global Warming Solutions Act. The Teamsters, representing more than 250,000 union members in California, is the first major union to officially oppose the measure, which is backed by a group of oil companies, Republican legislators and conservative activists. The group is gathering signatures to place the initiative on the November ballot.

"We must reject efforts to move backwards on protection of the environment," said Randy Cammack, co-chair of the Teamster's Public Affairs Council, which voted against the ballot measure. "Our members are citizens and neighbors as well as workers. We breathe the same air, drink the same water, and live on the same planet with every other human being. ...There is no inconsistency between protecting our environment and building a strong and vibrant economy."

The trucking industry sees it differently. The California Trucking Assn. last week endorsed the ballot measure, which proponents are calling the California Jobs Initiative. The trucking association, which represents 3,600 members who own 350,000 trucks, has been locked in conflict with the California Air Resources Board over air pollution rules for diesel emissions. The diesel emissions law, a measure to slash cancer-causing pollution, is separate from the climate law, which would curb carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Valerie Liese, chairwoman of the trucking association, said the climate law would drive manufacturers out of state, resulting in fewer customers for truckers.

The Teamsters' vote came a day after the 48-member governing board of the League of California Cities rejected a proposal to ask Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the California Air Resources Board to consider delaying enforcement of AB 32, the climate law. Los Angeles City Controller Wendy Gruel led the opposition to the roll-back proposal, according to the law's supporters. The San Francisco Chronicle reported that Richard Dixon, the mayor pro-tem of Lake Forest in Orange County, told colleagues it would cost as much as \$3 million for Orange County to comply -- a figure disputed by others attending the meeting. (NOTE: This post was updated to reflect the fact that the League rejected the roll-back proposal, but did not alter its neutral position on the law itself)

The proposal also unsuccessfully sought to delay implementation of regulations under SB 375, a law that rewards cities and counties for concentrating development in denser clusters to reduce automobile traffic that is a major cause of traditional air pollutants and also of greenhouse gases that are trapping heat in the atmosphere.

California's 2006 climate law, the toughest in the nation, would require the state to slash its carbon footprint by 15% over today's levels by 2020. Curbs on industry, automobiles and other sectors would begin to take effect next year, unless they are delayed by the ballot proposition. GOP gubernatorial candidates Steve Poizner and Meg Whitman also have endorsed a delay in the law, while Democrat Jerry Brown supports the current effort to implement the law.

Scientists say that greenhouse gas emissions are trapping heat in the atmosphere and disrupting the climate, including California water supplies, agriculture and ports threatened by sea-level rise.