

Jennifer Vinh

From: Yerim Lee (Irene) [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 10:09 AM
To: Heather Farr; Jennifer Vinh
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Comment for rule 1111 and 1121

Public Comment to the South Coast Air Quality Management District Board Members

Dear SCAQMD Board Members,

My name is Irene Yerim Lee, and I am currently a junior at Portola High School in Irvine. I have been following the rulemaking process for Rules 1111 and 1121 since October 2023, and I would like to thank the SCAQMD staff for their hard work and dedication over the past 20 months.

As a resident of Southern California, I have seen firsthand how poor air quality affects our daily lives, health, and future. I strongly support the SCAQMD's Zero-NOx policy and the overall goal of creating a cleaner and healthier environment. I also deeply respect the efforts made by the agency to engage diverse stakeholders throughout this process. Watching eight Working Group Meetings take place, I was inspired by how the agency attempted to bring together stakeholders with different interests, including residents, tenants, homeowners, small businesses, manufacturers, and public institutions to build social consensus, even though not everyone could be fully satisfied.

However, I would like to respectfully share some concerns about the most recent proposal introduced during the 8th Working Group Meeting in February 2025. After 16 months of focused discussion on banning gas appliances in both new and existing buildings, the introduction of the alternative compliance option has raised confusion among many stakeholders. It was only four months before the public hearing, and this sudden shift in the direction of the rule, especially so close to the final decision, has led to uncertainty and concern in the community.

Many residents have expressed worries that the new mitigation fee proposed under the alternative compliance option will result in increased product prices. This means the mitigation fee imposed for negative externalities on production of gas products will be the burden on the consumers instead. Since most residents are not experts in environmental policy or energy economics, their biggest fear is the financial impact this may have on their families. Manufacturers may also choose to pass on these costs to consumers, especially with the additional mitigation fees of \$250 for gas water heaters and \$500 for gas furnaces, on top of the base mitigation fee.

I understand that this alternative option was introduced in response to concerns about consumer choice, cost burden on low-income communities, and readiness of zero-emission technology. However, from a student's point of view, I wonder if this proposal truly helps ease the burden or unintentionally creates new barriers for the very people it aims to protect.

While I continue to support strong NOx emission regulations, I hope the Board will carefully consider whether the alternative compliance option has received enough discussion, community feedback, and consensus. This policy change affects real families, including those in my own neighborhood, and I believe we all need just a little more time to reach a fair and thoughtful social agreement.

Thank you again for your commitment to clean air and for listening to the voices of students like me.

Sincerely,

Irene Yerim Lee

11th Grade Student, Portola High School

Resident of Irvine, California

From: Yerim Lee <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, December 20, 2024 9:26 PM

To: hfarr@aqmd.gov <hfarr@aqmd.gov>

Subject: Comment for rule 1111 and 1121

Dear Ms. Farr

My name is Yerim Lee, and I am a junior at Portola High School in Irvine, as well as a committee member of the 'Cool Irvine Youth Steering Committee'. I had the opportunity to attend the recent stationary source meeting virtually regarding SCAQMD Rule 1111 and Rule 1121, where I heard various individuals representing their demographic groups and sharing their perspectives. Throughout the seven working groups meetings and today's stationary source meeting, I wanted to express my appreciation and support for SCAQMD's proactive efforts in advancing zero-emission initiatives, which are crucial for improving air quality in the South Coast region.

Living in one of the most polluted air basins in the United States, I have come to understand the immense challenges and efforts undertaken by state agencies, public organizations, and manufacturers to address this critical issue. Tracking the development and implementation of key regulations, such as Rule 1111 and Rule 1121, has deepened my appreciation for the thoughtful consideration given to technological feasibility, equity, and the urgency of reducing emissions from residential appliances like water heaters and heating systems.

I am especially inspired by SCAQMD's leadership in balancing diverse stakeholder interests, including those of manufacturers, environmental advocates, and public agencies, to achieve California's ambitious 2045 carbon neutrality goals. However, I recognize that significant barriers remain. Many households, including my own, find the transition from traditional gas systems to zero-emission units unfamiliar and financially challenging due to the higher upfront costs of equipment and installation.

To ensure the success of these initiatives, I kindly urge SCAQMD to continue advocating for structural changes that make zero-emission technologies more affordable. Expanding market incentives, increasing public awareness, and encouraging competitive pricing will be essential to overcoming these hurdles and fostering wider adoption.

Thank you once again for your dedication to improving our air quality and setting a powerful example for communities throughout California. I look forward to witnessing the continued progress and positive impact of your work.

Sincerely,
Yerim Lee