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DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR

01 February 2017

The Honorable Maia Bellon
Director
Washington State Department of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Dear Director Bellon,

I have the privilege of owning a team of 630 employees managing 13 commercial truck and bus dealerships, generating \$400 Million in annual revenue.

I write to encourage you to include the renewal and replacement of diesel school buses and heavy-duty trucks when the State of Washington prepares and submits its Beneficiary Mitigation Plan to the Trustee overseeing the Volkswagen Consent Decree. The \$103 million Washington is scheduled to receive for diesel mitigation activities represents a tremendous opportunity to protect the environment and improve air quality across the state.

The terms of the settlement allow Washington to seek and receive reimbursement of 100% of the purchase price of new, clean diesel-powered buses and heavy-duty trucks if they replace older, diesel powered vehicles purchased prior to 2007. Leveraging those generous terms would permit the state to renew the aging fleet of buses that transport tens of thousands of students, daily, to schools across Washington. Providing safe transport powered by the diesel engines that meet or exceed the EPA's most stringent standards would benefit our state's most vulnerable population.

Heavy-duty diesel trucks perform a myriad of critical municipal services, from hauling garbage to spreading salt and building infrastructure. Yet, budget realities mean that fleet renewal is perennially low on the list of priorities. Replacing the typically ancient trucks that keep our communities running with new, more capable and environmentally friendly trucks would benefit all taxpayers. And, since new trucks emit a tiny fraction of the pollutants produced by pre-2007 models, the measurable environmental benefits would be significant.

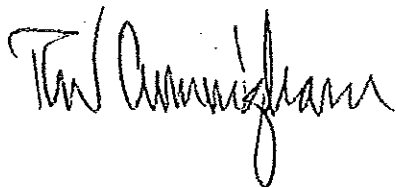
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I further counsel you to resist the pitch of those who would have you invest the windfall in the purchase of a fleet of expensive and unproven electric vehicles. While electric vehicles offer the illusion of environmental benefit, they merely shift the source of their emissions. They lack the decades-old, rock-solid record of dependability that diesel-powered trucks and buses have earned. And the need to dispose of the short-lived, toxic batteries that power electric vehicles guarantees the emergence of another environmental challenge in the not-too-distant future.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm confident you will shape a diesel mitigation plan that demonstrably improves Washington's air quality in a manner that makes prudent use of scarce resources. I look forward to the benefit of your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert W. Cunningham".

Robert W Cunningham
President

Corporate Headquarters

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