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**NYPIRG's Earth Day Count Down of Ten Steps New York Must Take to be a Green Leader
2018 Marks Ten Years of Delays of Law to Curb Diesel Emissions
Step 3: Finish the Job on DERA to Curb Asthma-Causing Diesel Pollutants**

(NY) – Step three in NYPIRG's Earth Day 2018 count down of ten steps that New York must take to be a national environmental leader is to finally fully implement the Diesel Emissions Reductions Act. New York must finish the job to improve air quality and reduce asthma rates—particularly important for communities subject to multiple pollution sources.

New York enacted the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act ("DERA") in 2006 to curb asthma causing diesel emissions by applying stringent standards to heavy-duty vehicles used by the state and its contractors. The law required the state and the businesses it contracts with to replace or retrofit these vehicles to dramatically reduce diesel emissions. Diesel exhaust—especially the particulate matter—is associated with a number of serious health problems, including asthma, chronic bronchitis, respiratory tract infections, heart disease and stroke.

As of 2012, an estimated 1.4 million adult New Yorkers suffered from asthma, as did some 315,000 children in 2010, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The health consequences linked to diesel emissions are staggering: Asthma-related costs alone for the state's Medicaid recipients with asthma exceeded \$532 million in fiscal 2012-13, according to a 2014 report by the Office of the State Comptroller.

The need to curb diesel emissions was recognized in DERA's Legislative Findings and Declarations preamble:

The Legislature hereby finds and declares that diesel exhaust particle pollution is a clear and present health threat to New Yorkers. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, diesel exhaust particles are a likely lung cancer agent. In New York state, diesel exhaust is also the prime contributor to airborne fine particle pollution which is linked to premature death, asthma attacks, and cardiovascular disease. Diesel exhaust is also a contributor to formation of ground level ozone; a powerful respiratory irritant that is linked to premature death, asthma attacks and can damage the lung tissue of children.

Despite the fact that DERA was *supposed to be fully implemented by 2010*, each year it has been delayed in the state's secret budget negotiations, allowing vehicles with antiquated emission controls used by the state and its contractors to continue to pollute our air and threaten the health of our communities. **A dozen years after DERA was signed into law, once again the 2019 budget delayed its full application.**

New York must finish the job, by fully implementing DERA to protect public health—particularly children in highly-impacted communities—and advance the state's climate change agenda.

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