

Testimony for 12/4 Hearing on  
EPA's Proposal to Repeal Emission Requirements for Glider Vehicles  
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- Hello, my name is Erin Murphy and I am a Legal Fellow with the Environmental Defense Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.
- I am here speaking in opposition to EPA's proposal to reopen a dangerous loophole for glider trucks, which are outdated, super-polluting diesel freight trucks.
- The proposed rollback of limits on glider truck pollution is senseless. It would result in an enormous increase in pollution and would have a staggering, detrimental impact on public health. Furthermore, the proposal would advantage one small segment of the freight truck industry, at the expense of more responsible manufacturers.

*HEALTH*

- EPA's proposal would allow unlimited numbers of new glider trucks to be sold with dirty engines, without any pollution controls.
  - These glider trucks emit harmful soot and smog-causing pollutants: oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter, and diesel particulate.
  - Exposure to those air pollutants is known to cause or worsen respiratory diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema, can aggravate heart disease, and can even cause premature death.<sup>1</sup> Diesel particulate is known to cause cancer.<sup>2</sup>
- EPA's mission is to protect human health, and as science advances, EPA updates its rules to help protect Americans from harmful pollutants in the air we breathe. That's why Congress created this dynamic agency – to bring together scientists, policymakers, & unbiased experts to help keep people and our environment healthy.
  - It's important to remember the past, when we didn't have the benefit of sound science and sensible safeguards.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/health-and-environmental-effects-particulate-matter-pm>;  
<https://www.epa.gov/no2-pollution/basic-information-about-no2#Effects>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/diesel-exhaust-and-cancer.html>; [https://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2012/pdfs/pr213\\_E.pdf](https://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2012/pdfs/pr213_E.pdf)

- My mom has told me stories of how, as a kid playing outside, she and her friends would run through the neighborhood chasing the DDT truck. The kids would race to keep up with the truck and run through the clouds of DDT.
- Fifty years later, my mother's story is horrifying. We know now that DDT is toxic – it is a likely carcinogen and an endocrine disruptor.<sup>3</sup> Our country has taken action to protect Americans from this dangerous substance.
- Just as we learned more about DDT, we have learned about the harmful emissions from freight trucks. EPA issued standards to limit dangerous pollution from freight trucks, and manufacturers developed technology to reduce pollution, so that trucks produced today are vastly cleaner and safer than just 20-30 years ago.
- We know that the pollution emitted by uncontrolled freight trucks is very harmful to human health. Reopening the gliders loophole could result in 6,400 premature deaths, just from glider trucks sold through 2021.<sup>4</sup> So why would we do that? Why go back to allowing trucks on the road that emit so much pollution, when information on the health consequences is so clear?

#### *UNFAIR TO LAW-ABIDING BUSINESS*

- These questions are particularly hard to answer because Administrator Pruitt's proposal benefits just a few companies, while disadvantaging responsible freight truck manufacturers that have invested in pollution controls.
  - Let's review the history -- there used to be a loophole that allowed these glider trucks to be built *without* having to comply with current pollution rules. Then, in the phase 2 rule regulating greenhouse gas emissions from heavy-duty vehicles, issued in October 2016, the EPA closed the glider trucks loophole.<sup>5</sup> No one challenged EPA's decision to close the glider loophole at that time.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/ingredients-used-pesticide-products/ddt-brief-history-and-status>

<sup>4</sup> <http://blogs.edf.org/climate411/2017/11/16/epas-pruitt-tries-to-open-a-loophole-to-allow-super-polluting-trucks-on-our-roads/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/10/25/2016-21203/greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-fuel-efficiency-standards-for-medium--and-heavy-duty-engines-and>

- Fitzgerald Glider Kits is the largest glider kit dealer in the country.<sup>6</sup> During the 2016 election, Trump visited the Fitzgerald facility for an event. Earlier this year, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt met with the owner of Fitzgerald Glider Kits.<sup>7</sup>
  - Only after its private meeting with Administrator Pruitt did Fitzgerald file a petition asking EPA to reconsider the glider rule.<sup>8</sup> Administrator Pruitt agreed.<sup>9</sup> That process resulted in the proposal we are discussing today.<sup>10</sup>
  - This is cronyism.
  - If EPA goes through with this proposal to reopen the loophole, other truck manufacturers—who are already complying with existing standards—will be forced to compete for sales with super-polluting glider trucks.
  - Volvo, which manufactures MAC trucks, has stated that the availability of glider trucks creates “an unlevel playing field for manufacturers of new vehicles.”<sup>11</sup>
- EPA’s proposal to reopen the loophole for glider trucks is counter to the agency’s core mission. The American people rely on EPA to monitor health threats and protect the public from dangerous pollution. This rule would increase exposure to harmful pollution, causing Americans to get sick and die early, and just for the sake of political cronyism. EPA should not reopen the glider trucks loophole.
- Thank you again for the opportunity testify.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fitzgeraldgliderkits.com/about-fitzgerald/>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/epa-is-taking-more-advice-from-industry--and-ignoring-its-own-scientists/2017/11/10/aa1fbaba-b8fb-11e7-9e58-e6288544af98\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.115603055540;](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/epa-is-taking-more-advice-from-industry--and-ignoring-its-own-scientists/2017/11/10/aa1fbaba-b8fb-11e7-9e58-e6288544af98_story.html?utm_term=.115603055540;)  
<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4064980-Pruitt-Sked-and-McCarthy-Sked.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-07/documents/hd-ghg-fr-fitzgerald-recons-petition-2017-07-10.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-08/documents/hd-ghg-phase2-fitzgerald-gliders-ltr-2017-08-17.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/proposed-rule-repeal-emission-requirements-glider>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0827-1966>