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Senate of Pennsylvania

August 17, 2017

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Honorable Leslie Richards
Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Secretary Richards:

I write to request a temporary halt on the state-mandated requirement to purchase the new On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) emissions analyzer equipment in Cambria County.

Over the last year as I have traveled around Cambria County, it has become apparent that the emissions testing is a serious concern, causing local angst and frustration. This frustration is compounded by the lack of a requirement for emissions testing among neighboring counties with the exception of Blair County to the east.

To that end, I have introduced Senate Resolution 168 (SR 168), which directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the potential impact of removing Cambria County from the emissions testing program and report findings and recommendations to the Senate. SR 168 is currently assigned to the Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee and I am advocating for it to be considered in the coming months.

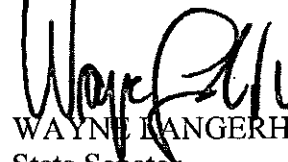
It is because of this upcoming study that I am requesting the temporary halt for Cambria County Inspection Stations from the requirement to purchase this new equipment. I am aware of how PennDOT contracts work, how outdated equipment needs to be upgraded, and how we must continue to ensure we collect useful data on our emissions program. However, with the possibility that Cambria County may eventually be removed from the State Implementation Plan (SIP), I am hopeful that we can come to a temporary agreement to provide some relief to the small business owners and others who are currently, or will be, required to upgrade their equipment for between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

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It is my understanding that as part of the SIP, counties in the Northern Region (which includes Blair, Cambria, Centre, Erie, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming and Mercer Counties) have no requirement to perform an OBD Check as part of their emissions inspection, but only the Gas Cap Test and the Visual Anti-Tampering Check. Given the absence of the requirement to perform an OBD Check in Cambria County, it is unnecessary to mandate inspection stations to purchase equipment for a test that is not required. I would suggest that purchasing the new equipment only be optional, as some inspection stations may choose to upgrade so they can serve residents in counties that do have an OBD requirement.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. If you should have any further questions or concerns about this request, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to continuing to work with you on this and other transportation issues that may arise in the 35th Senatorial District.

Kind regard,



WAYNE RANGERHOLC, JR.
State Senator
35th Senatorial District