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Gov. Brown signs Frazier bill to get more clean-energy trucks on the road

SACRAMENTO – Gov. Jerry Brown has signed a bill by Assemblymember Jim Frazier (D-Discovery Bay), chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee, which clears the path to start replacing diesel and gasoline fueled commercial trucks with zero-emission and near-zero-emission models. AB 2061 was approved by the Legislature with strong bipartisan support.

“California is leading the nation in the quest to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality,” Frazier said. “However, old-school heavy duty commercial trucks that burn high-emission fuels are still prevalent on the state’s roads and highways. These vehicles are the most concentrated source of the state’s annual emissions from the transportation sector. Incentivizing the use of trucks powered by clean technology is crucial to reducing harmful pollution and meeting the state’s emission reduction goals.”

“Major transportation corridors tend to run next to lower-income and disadvantaged communities and the pollution from these trucks disproportionately impacts this segment of our population,” Frazier added.

The engine and propulsion systems in electric, hydrogen and natural gas powered trucks weigh more than the traditional internal combustion engine by as much as 2,000 pounds. Under current law, cleaner-energy trucks currently must reduce their range and carrying capacity in

order to comply with state weight laws, creating a disincentive for businesses to invest in cleaner trucks. AB 2061 removes this barrier by creating a 2,000-pound weight exemption for zero-emission (ZE) and near-zero-emission (NZE) vehicles.

The bill had the backing of 60 large companies and organizations, including United Parcel Service, Tesla and Cummins, CALSTART and the California Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition.

“UPS would like to acknowledge Assemblymember Frazier for his work shepherding AB 2061 through the Legislature to promote clean air technology, and the governor for his signature on the bill,” said Bruce D. D. Mac RAE, United Parcel Service vice president for state government affairs, West Region. “AB 2061 is consistent with UPS’ investment in clean air technology and signals to the transportation industry that embracing cleaner technology is good for the environment and good for business. UPS has made – and will continue to make – investment in zero and near-zero emissions technology a priority.”

“Tesla’s electric semi will eliminate millions of tons of harmful emissions that impact communities across California and bring significant savings for operators,” Tesla, Inc. said in a statement. “We appreciate Assemblymember Frazier’s leadership and the state Legislature’s bipartisan support to help level the playing field for clean trucks and accelerate a sustainable transportation future.”

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Assemblymember Frazier represents the 11th Assembly District, which includes the communities of Antioch, Bethel Island, Birds Landing, Brentwood, Byron, Collinsville, Discovery Bay, Fairfield, Isleton, Knightsen, Locke, Oakley, Pittsburg (partial), Rio Vista, Suisun City, Travis AFB, Vacaville and Walnut Grove.

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