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**Houston-Galveston Area Council**

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September 27, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

We would like to take this opportunity to recommend the adoption of the enclosed anti-idling policy, which H-GAC developed in partnership with representatives from around the region. This policy addresses three issues of importance—air pollution, the health of children, and fuel conservation.

As you may know, the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria (HGB) region is generally recognized as one of the regions with the worst air quality in the nation. Numerous pollutants can be found at elevated levels throughout the region. In general, air pollutants are known to result in negative economic impacts, ecosystem damage and negative health effects. Mobile sources, such as gasoline and diesel fueled vehicles, are a significant source of air pollution. The emissions that result from the operation of school buses, including nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, fine particulates, and air toxics, such as benzene and formaldehyde, are particularly grievous to the health of growing children. These pollutants can potentially trigger asthma attacks and other ailments; additionally the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that vehicle emissions account for as many as half of all cancers attributed to outdoor air pollution.

The average school bus uses ½ gallon of diesel fuel for each hour of idling; by reducing idling by 30 minutes per day, districts would save approximately 45 gallons and \$135.00 per bus per year. Likewise, a car idling for 10 minutes uses as much fuel as it takes to travel 5 miles and uses more than 27 gallons of fuel a year; assuming that the average car produces about 20 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per gallon of gasoline used, a reduction in idling will result in a reduction of 440 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> annually.

In light of the potential benefits of this policy, the Board of Directors of the Houston-Galveston Area Council encourages you to adopt the accompanying model resolution supporting the adoption of “Idle Free Zones” on school grounds, including a pledge by school buses, school employees, and parents to work together to implement this resolution.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Addie Wiseman  
H-GAC Chair  
Council Member, City of Houston