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Contact: Stuart C. Ross  
Clean Air Task Force  
914-649-5037 (cell)  
sross@catf.us

**CLEAN AIR TASK FORCE CALLS ON CONGRESS TO COMBAT  
BLACK CARBON POLLUTION TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE,  
PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS**

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**Conrad Schneider, CATF Advocacy Director, Testifies at House Select  
Committee Hearing on Energy Independence and Global Warming**

WASHINGTON, March 16, 2010 -- In remarks addressed to the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming today, Clean Air Task Force Advocacy Director Conrad Schneider called on Congress to take decisive steps to curb black carbon pollution, which he called “a potent climate-forcing agent, but also a deadly air pollutant.”

In his testimony, Schneider also pointed out that, unlike carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, black carbon’s footprint can be measured in weeks and months, instead of centuries. So actions that Congress could take to reduce black carbon emissions could have an almost immediate effect on slowing the rate of global warming. When emitted from various terrestrial sources, black carbon tends to settle in Arctic zones, darkening the ice and snow cover, thereby absorbing more solar radiation and hastening melting.

Curbing black carbon could have significant public health benefits, as well. The Clean Air Task Force, using U.S. EPA methodology approved by the National Academy of Sciences, has estimated that diesel particulate emissions will cause over 21,000 premature deaths this year.

Schneider outlined the primary causes of black carbon pollution – diesel engine emissions, residential solid fuel stoves primarily in the developing world, industrial sources such as brick kilns and coke ovens, and agricultural burning. “The solutions for each of these source categories are simple,” Schneider said, “but this is far easier said than done.”

- For diesel engines, he said, “the needed policies boil down to mandates and money.” Emissions standards for new diesel engines are already in place in the developed world, and, if adopted by developing countries such as China, India and Brazil, significant reductions of black carbon emissions would be realized over the next 20 years.

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However, to retrofit more existing diesel engines with effective filters, Schneider called for better funding for legislation already on the books, and for increased incentives under the Transportation Act, set for renewal this year.

- Schneider stated that the Waxman-Markey climate bill, passed in the House last summer, called for providing assistance for developing new, pollution-reduced cook stoves throughout the developing world, but funding was not part of the legislation. He advocated for “the creation of jointly-funded programs in the public, private and non-profit sectors that will develop regionally-appropriate strategies to deploy cleaner cook stoves globally.”
- Spring agricultural fires in the Northern Hemisphere are most destructive in the spring, when arctic ice and snow is most affected by black carbon, Schneider explained. Changing long-held burning practices around the world at minimum, therefore “would require education, engagement by the international community, and enforcement of no-burn laws” in each of the countries involved.

In conclusion of his remarks, Schneider charged the panel to help develop and implement policies to curb black carbon emissions “without delay” as they can deliver immediate climate benefits as well as important public health protection. “Winning these policies domestically and globally will be challenging, but their significant health benefits make them extremely cost-beneficial and they may constitute our best hedge against near-term climate impacts.”

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*The Clean Air Task Force is a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing atmospheric pollution through research, advocacy, and private sector collaboration. Visit us at [www.catf.us](http://www.catf.us). For a complete transcript of Mr. Schneider's remarks, including his written testimony, please go to [www.catf.us/advocacy/legal/](http://www.catf.us/advocacy/legal/). CATF was one of the first organizations to work on the black carbon issue, and to see our landmark report on diesel emissions and public health, “Diesel and Health in America: The Lingering Threat,” please go to: [www.catf.us/publications/view/83](http://www.catf.us/publications/view/83)*