

# Clinicians for Climate Action New Jersey

*Medical and Health Professionals Calling for Change*

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March 14, 2025

Dear Senate President Scutari & Speaker Coughlin:

The New Jersey Clinicians for Climate Action is an organization of health professionals who are extremely concerned about the emerging health crisis arising from humanity's continued reliance on fossil fuels. We are grateful for the forward-thinking work that you and your colleagues in the Legislature have undertaken in recent years to address this public health emergency. Joining our colleagues across the nation, our role in this effort remains crystal clear: we will continue to strongly urge that the Legislature and the Administration take immediate, dramatic, and durable action to protect New Jersey's children and communities from the devastating health impacts of a warming world. Time is of the essence.

As such, CCANJ, along with more than 100 New Jersey health professionals, urges you to support, without delay, the implementation of the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) regulation adopted by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in 2021. This policy is crucial for reducing extremely harmful airborne pollutants. Delaying the implementation of ACT would impede New Jersey's commitment to safeguarding the health of all its residents, especially communities disproportionately impacted by air pollution. Transportation is the [largest contributor to air pollution](#) in our state, and accounts for approximately [40% of our greenhouse emissions](#).

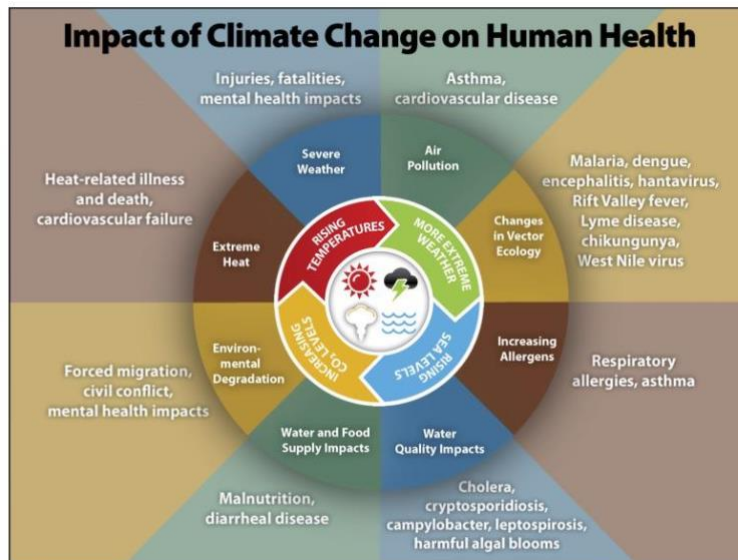
[Diesel emissions](#) from medium and heavy-duty trucks release fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen oxides (NOx), which also contribute to the formation of ground-level [ozone](#). These pollutants cause and exacerbate respiratory diseases and cardiovascular impairments, and are clearly linked to premature deaths. Data from the [American Lung Association](#) and others provides unambiguous proof that these health harms are concentrated near major NJ transit routes and industrial areas, where overburdened communities face higher rates of asthma, hospitalizations, and other debilitating health effects. [Accelerating the adoption](#) of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) in the trucking sector through ACT will [significantly reduce pollutants](#) that harm the health of families and individuals. [Studies](#) have shown that replacing gas-powered vehicles with electric vehicles in cities will significantly reduce air pollution-related death and illness. By transitioning to [cleaner trucks](#), we can improve air quality, reduce health disparities, and create a [healthier environment](#) for all New Jerseyans.

The transition to cleaner trucks also presents an economic opportunity, promoting job growth in the clean energy and automotive sectors through the ZEV market, and in building the infrastructure needed statewide, positioning New Jersey at the forefront of sustainable innovation. At the same time, ACT provides manufacturers with the flexibility to gradually ramp up the production and deployment of ZEVs. This structured, phased approach supports both the practical needs of manufacturers and our environmental goals.

The World Health Organization declared climate change to be “*the greatest threat to global health in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*” The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change states that climate change has “*already produced considerable shifts in the underlying social and environmental determinants of health.*” In 2021, [a study from Harvard’s TH Chan School of Public Health](#) backed these assertions in startling fashion. The study found that more than 8 million people worldwide died in 2018 from fossil fuel pollution (almost equivalent to the population of New York City).

Experts in public health policy focus on the social determinants of health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention define social determinants as the “*conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of life-risks and outcomes.*” As health care professionals, we want to ensure that you recognize that climate change is the single most powerful and overarching detrimental driver poised to undermine **all** social determinants of health.

One has only to look at the CDC diagram below depicting the impacts of climate change on human health to understand why health professionals worldwide are calling for far more action.



The ACT initiative not only drives innovation in the automotive industry but also fosters collaboration across sectors to achieve a sustainable, low-emission future. Together, we can create a transportation system that benefits [public health](#), while boosting our economy by growing jobs in the clean energy sector.

We strongly support ACT implementation and continuing this path toward a cleaner, healthier, and more equitable future for our children and our communities.

Sincerely,  
 Clinicians for Climate Action New Jersey,  
 and the undersigned New Jersey health professionals

|                         |                       |                        |
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