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DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
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March 21, 2016

TO: Rep. Joann Ginal, Ph.D.
Colorado State House of Representatives
House District 52
1525 Sherman St. Rm. 626
Denver, Colorado 80203

THROUGH: Bob Overbeck, Fort Collins City Council

RE: **Support for House Bill 16-1319**

Dear Rep. Ginal,

Please accept this letter of support for House Bill 16-1319 and its prohibition of "coal rolling" or "rolling coal". As the agency responsible for developing public-private partnerships for the past three decades to support the revitalization of Downtown Fort Collins, we have observed this persistent issue of certain diesel fueled vehicles intentionally discharging black smoke as a form of harassment to other drivers and pedestrians. The proposed bill provides a measured and meaningful response to a problem that is both unhealthy and annoying.

The vibrancy of Downtown Fort Collins is characterized by its numerous blocks of outdoor dining patios, pleasant sidewalks lined with historic retail storefronts, and enhanced pedestrian plazas and alleyways. Engaging life in the urban setting in Downtown Fort Collins is a favorite past time of community residents and visiting tourists, and this level of activity occurs year round and for up to 18 hours per day. Downtown Fort Collins is a busy, bustling, and people filled center of life in the community.

Downtown Fort Collins also has one U.S. Highway (U.S. Highway 287) and one State Highway (HWY 14) that transect the central business district. These highways see voluminous numbers of interstate truck traffic. These diesel powered semi-trucks involved in interstate commerce are not the issue. Rather it is the private-owned, often modified diesel pick-up trucks whose drivers find humor in the aggravation they impose on unsuspecting downtown patrons.

When a vehicle "rolls coal" in Downtown Fort Collins it is often observed as a form of harassment to patrons. Rolling coal is the annoying gesture to envelop a group of pedestrians in a cloud of black smoke as they wait to cross the street at an intersection, or to surprise unsuspecting motorists stopped alongside the pick-up truck at a traffic signal with a burst of blinding pollution, or to show-off to patrons attempting to have a dining experience on an outdoor patio. The impact is harmful to the environment and clearly unnecessary as numerous other diesel powered vehicles traverse the streets and highways of Fort Collins without the need to exhibit the intentional blowing of black smoke.

House Bill 16-1319 will provide a new tool to law enforcement to curtail the problem of "coal rolling" and "rolling coal". Thank you for recognizing this issue with a thoughtful response of proposed legislation and to bring about a rationale solution.

Sincerely,

Matt Robenalt
Executive Director