



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

August 4, 2021

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Michele Gardner, Town Clerk

SUBJECT: Authorize Mayor Ackerman to send a letter supporting AB 1346 (Berman) – Zero-Emission Small Off-Road Engines, which would phase out the sale of new gas-powered small off-road engines

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize Mayor Ackerman to send the attached letter supporting AB 1346 (Berman) – Zero-Emission Small Off-Road Engines.

DISCUSSION

The Climate Action Committee (CAC) has recommended the Council support this bill to phase out the sale of new gas-powered small off-road engines.

Attached is the DRAFT letter, provided by CAC.

ATTACHMENT

Proposed letter

Draft Letter

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support AB 1346 (Berman) – Zero-Emission Small Off-Road Engines

Dear Chair Gonzalez:

On behalf of the Town of Fairfax, I write to express our strong support for Assembly Bill 1346 (Berman), which would phase out the sale of new gas-powered small off-road engines.

Small off-road engines (SORE) emit high levels of air pollutants, includes oxides of nitrogen (NOx), reactive organic gases (ROG), and particulate matter (PM). For example, one hour of operation of a commercial leaf blower can emit as much ROG and NOx as driving 1,100 miles in a 2017 Toyota Camry. In 2020, California daily NOx and ROG emissions from SORE surpassed emissions from light-duty passenger cars. If the state does not take action, emission levels from small engines are expected to increase. By 2031, small engine emissions will be more than twice those from passenger cars.

There are zero-emission equivalents to all SORE that are regulated by CARB, generally electric alternatives that run on batteries or plug into an outlet. Many users, including over half of household users, have already begun the transition to zero-emission equipment.

AB 1346 would require CARB to adopt cost-effective and technologically feasible regulations to prohibit engine exhaust and evaporative emissions from new small off-road engines by July 1, 2022. Those regulations would apply to engines produced on or after January 1, 2024, or as soon as CARB determines is feasible, whichever is later.

The Town of Fairfax has declared a Climate Emergency, and developed our second revision of our Climate Action Plan. Part of Plan implementation will be consideration of an ordinance banning gas-powered landscape maintenance equipment. AB 1346 and related funding requests for State-supported incentive program will help our Town eliminate these gas-powered machines, achieve the emissions reductions needed to meet our climate goals, and improve health in our community by reducing air pollution. For these reasons and more, the Town of Fairfax supports AB 1346 and urges its passage.

Sincerely,

Bruce Ackerman
Mayor