

Oral Comments of Emily Thompson, Manager of Nationwide Policy for Clean Outdoor Air at the American Lung Association to California Air Resources Board (CARB) on its proposed updates to Landfill Methane Regulations

November 20, 2025

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Emily Thompson, I am the Manager of Nationwide Policy for Clean Outdoor Air at the American Lung Association, and I'm here in support of the proposed amendments to the Landfill Methane Regulation and believe that additional attention to data access for communities would further support health.

Methane emissions from landfills are the third largest source of human-related methane in the United States. Reducing methane emissions has become a global priority. The United Nations Environment Programme has made it clear: we cannot meet our climate goals without drastic reductions in methane.

Climate change is already impacting the health of people across California and the country. This year alone, we've seen deadly wildfires, dangerous flooding and extreme heat waves - disasters made worse by climate change, which is being accelerated by methane.

California's landfill methane rule, first adopted in 2010, was a critical step forward. But fifteen years later, we know more and we can do better. The proposed amendments are a step forward, reflecting years of research, technological improvements and lessons learned from landfill fires - including underground smoldering events that have exposed communities to harmful pollution in California. During a landfill fire, air pollutants such as volatile organic compounds and carcinogens like benzene are released alongside methane, causing severe health risks for nearby communities. Strengthening these methane protections means strengthening public health and safety, and we encourage the board to consider further strengthening opportunities to identify leaks and make community data more accessible.

Communities living near landfills deserve to know what they are breathing. I urge CARB to also ensure that these amendments include requirements for real-time fence line monitoring, with publicly available data; quarterly and annual reports published online; and a public data dashboard displaying emissions and operational information as soon as practicable. These measures will not only reduce methane emissions but they will also build trust, accountability and healthier communities across California.

Thank you for your continued leadership in protecting clean air and community health.