**SD-SEQUEL Testimony at the CARB Meeting, December 9, 2021**

Dear Chair Randolph and Members of the Board,

I’m Dr. Ronald Askeland, coleader of SD-SEQUEL: San Diegans for Sustainable, Equitable & Quiet Equipment in Landscaping.

We support the adoption of new regulations that will phase out the sale of highly polluting gas-powered leaf blowers and other lawn equipment in California beginning in 2024. **Please approve and amend the SORE regulations per the staff recommendation.**This regulation will improve air quality, help to slow the climate crisis, improve human health, and save lives.

Emissions and noise levels from gas-powered leaf blowers present a threat to public health.  Smog-forming emissions from small off-road engines in California will surpass those from passenger vehicles this year. Equipment operators are overexposed to toxic fumes, respiratory irritating fine particulates, and unsafe noise levels at close range. The vibration from gas-powered leaf blowers is also known to cause nerve damage in the hands and arms of operators. Children, older persons and people with hearing disorders or neurological conditions like autism are especially vulnerable.

The health hazards posed by gas-powered leaf blowers are an environmental justice issue for both the equipment operators and our most vulnerable populations. Please implement a trade-in program for small landscaping businesses that covers 75% or more of the cost of replacement electric lawn maintenance equipment.  We believe that trade-in programs would be most effective when administered by local Air Pollution Control Districts.

Replacing 2-stroke engines needs to be the top priority due to their disproportionate level of emissions of hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrous oxides.

The time to act is now.