

2026 Smog Check Performance Report and United States Environmental Protection Agency Report

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Bureau of Automotive Repair

Reporting requirements (1 of 2)

- The Smog Check Performance Report (SCPR) is required by California Health and Safety Code section 44024.5(b).
 - Meets the biennial reporting requirement for data collected during CY 2024 and 2025
 - Includes an analysis of Roadside Emissions Survey Program vs. Smog Check Program vehicle failure rates
 - Provides an estimate of potential additional emission reductions
 - Includes an independent review by U.C. Riverside Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT)

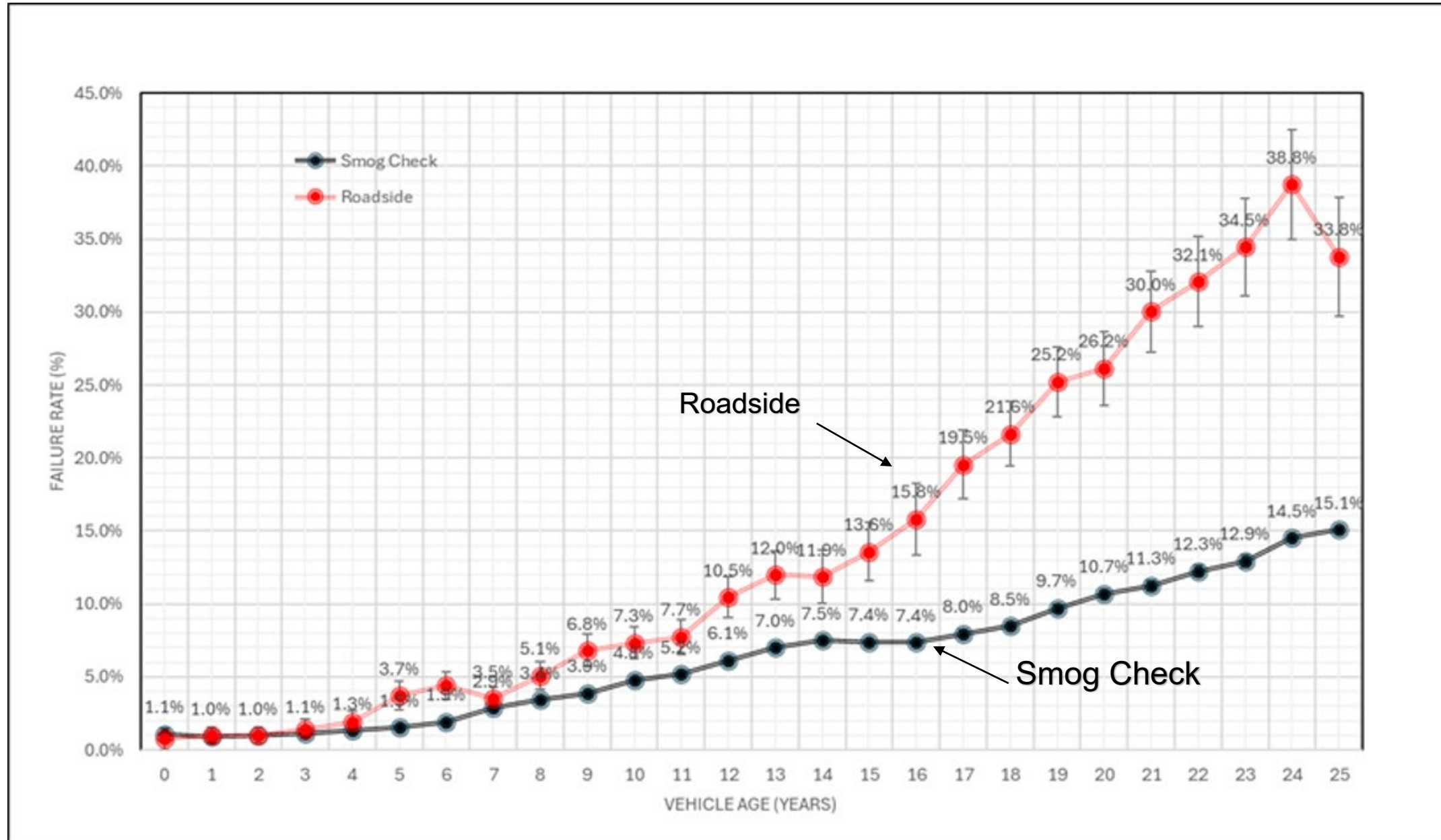
Reporting requirements (2 of 2)

- The United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) Report is required by the federal Clean Air Act and section 51.366 of the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR Part 51, Subpart S).

1990 finding and recommendations

- Finding
 - “...many of the vehicles that initially failed during the previous Smog Check cycle were not actually repaired or were repaired only temporarily.”
- Recommendations
 - Refine station performance algorithms for increased enforcement
 - Incentivize high station performance
 - Perform confirmatory testing immediately following certification through either roadside or on-site testing
 - Continue roadside inspections to audit Smog Check and target low performing stations

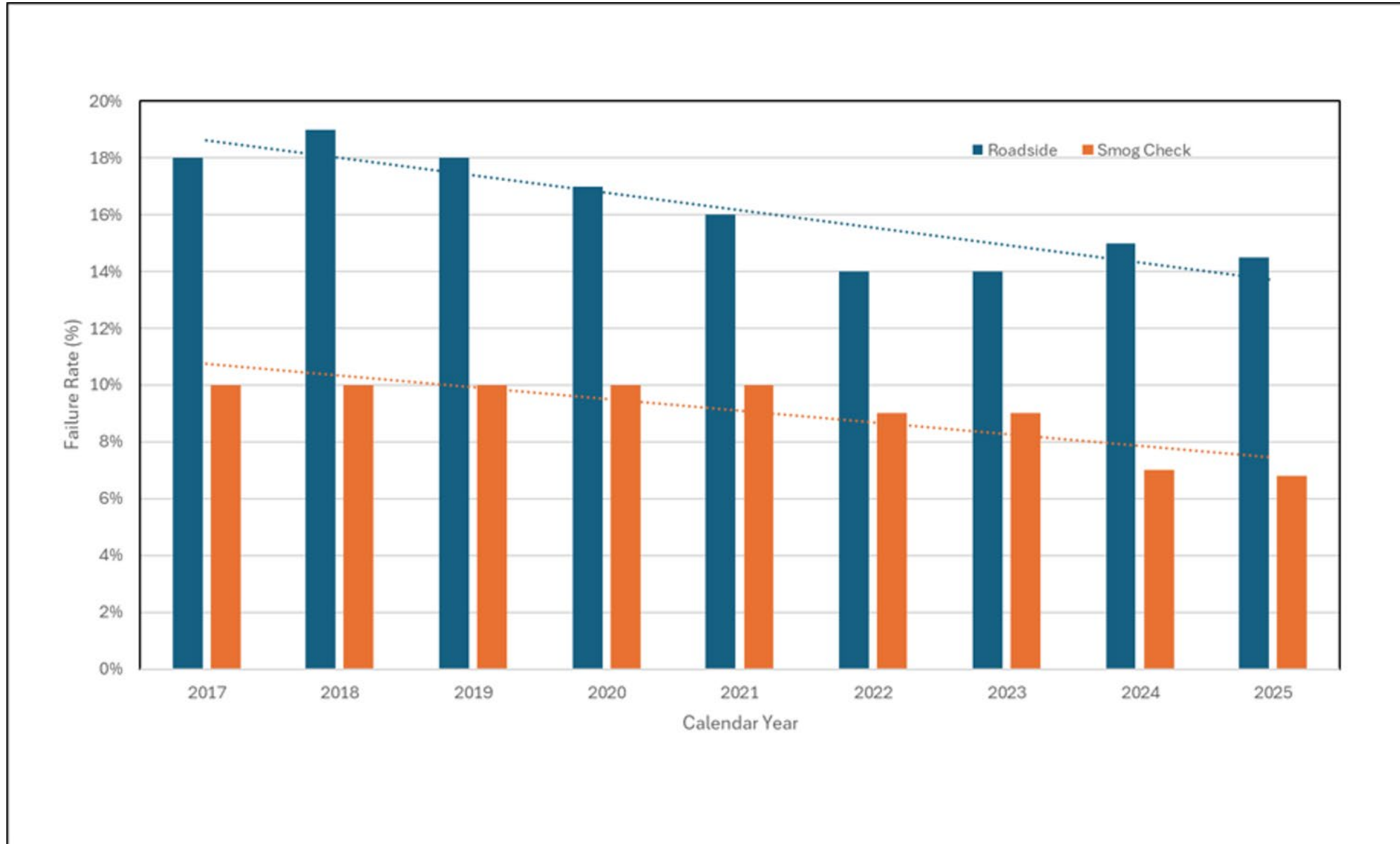
Failure rates by vehicle age



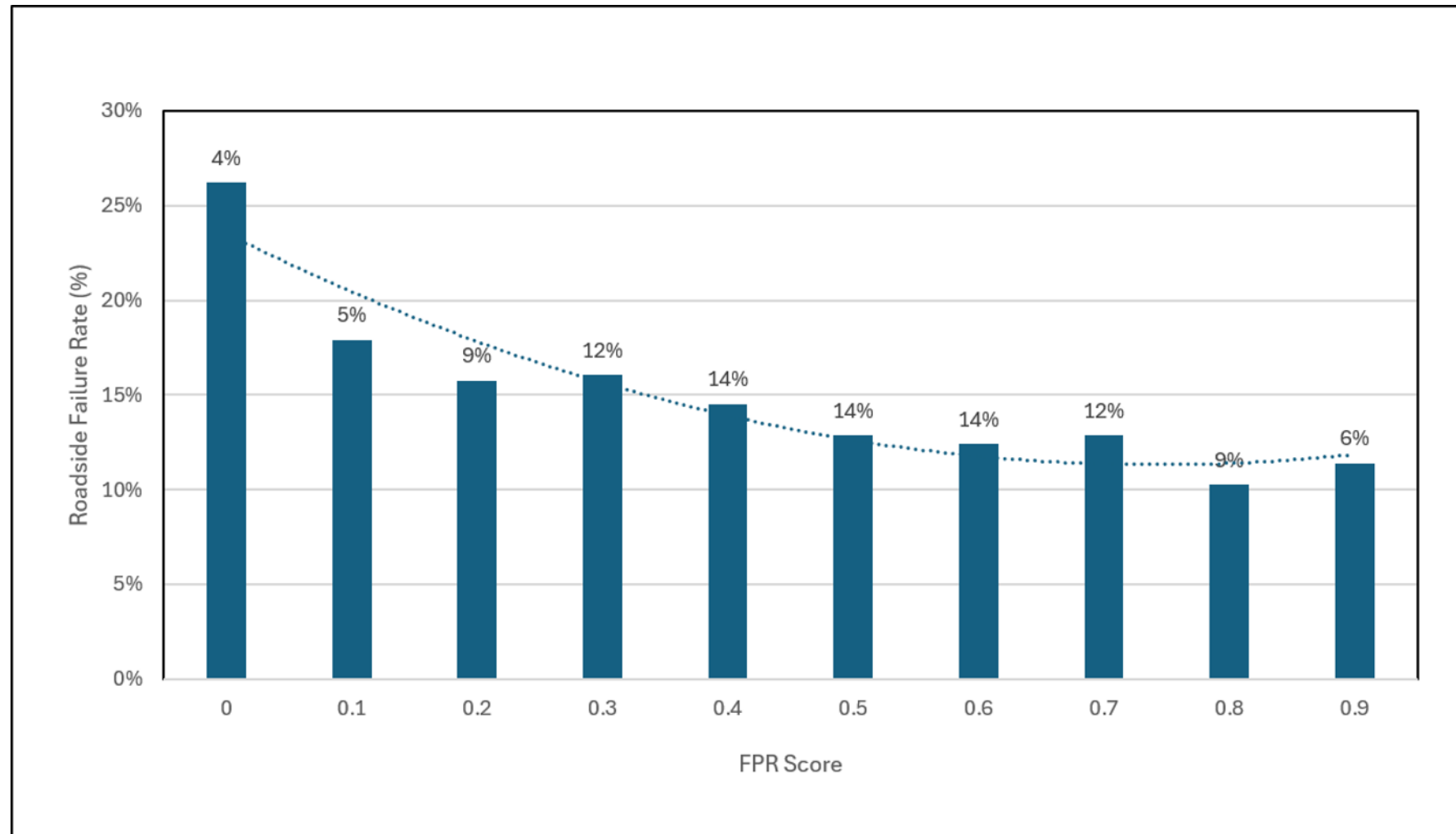
2026 Smog Check Performance Report findings

- The 2024-25 roadside failure rate was 14%, which is comparable to the 2024 SCPR.
- Vehicles certified by “high performing” Smog Check stations failed at a lower rate at roadside compared to “low performing” stations.
- Incremental improvements to the program are evidenced by:
 - Declining overall failure rate
 - Narrowing difference between roadside and Smog Check failure rates
 - Increased enforcement actions against stations and technicians engaging in fraudulent practices

Current and historic failure rates



Roadside failure by station performance



Note: The percentage above the bars reflects stations whose scores fall into each Follow-up Pass Rate (FPR) range.

BAR enforcement activities

- From 2016 to 2025, BAR filed 1,534 “data-only” cases with the Attorney General’s Office, resulting in 1,336 license revocations and 397 suspensions or probations.
- BAR continued administrative disciplinary action against stations suspected of clean-piping, clean-gassing, clean-plugging and clean-tanking.
- BAR continued work with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to significantly curtail registration-based fraud.

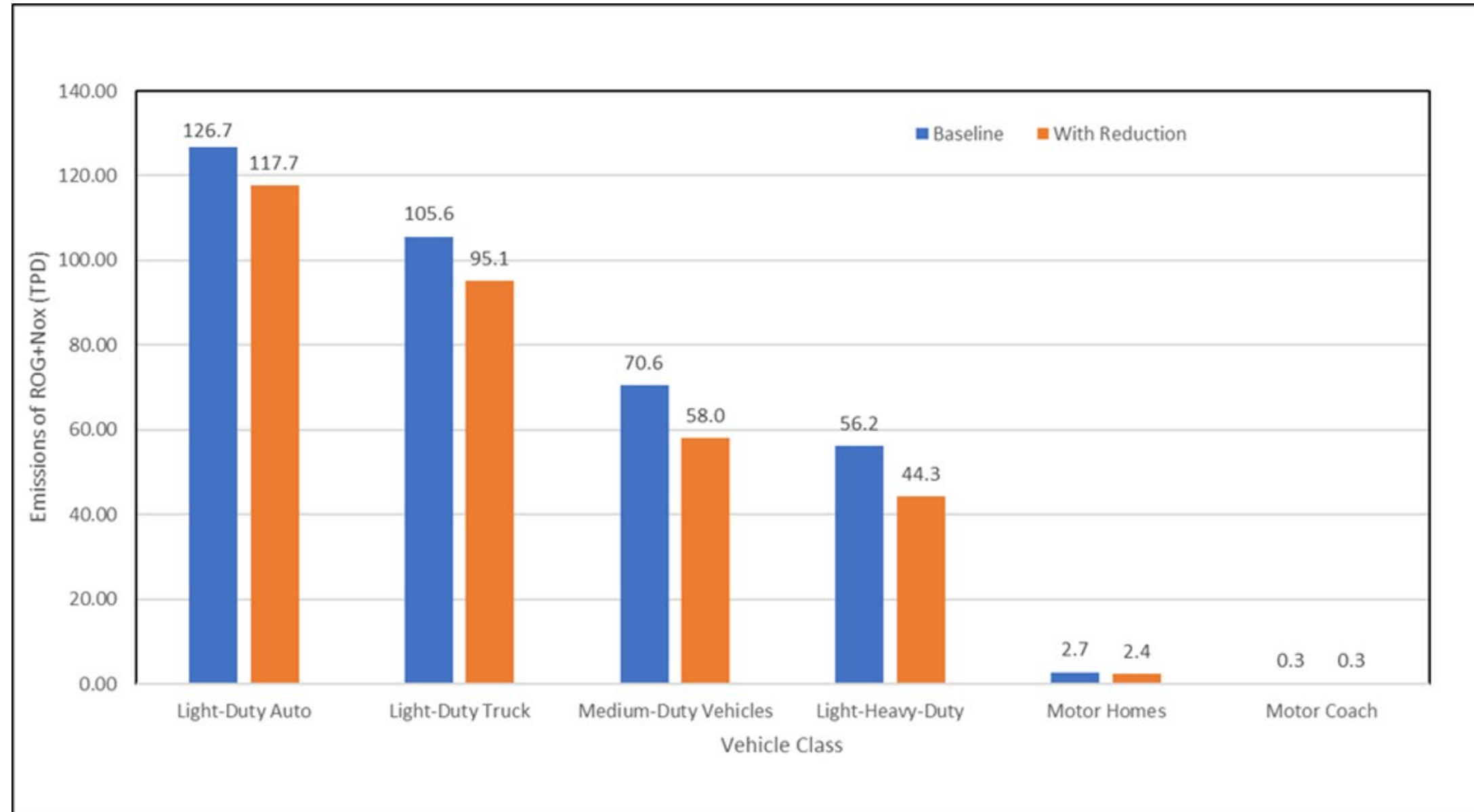
Indications of program performance

- Vehicles certified by stations with subsequently revoked licenses failed at consistently higher rates at roadside compared to those certified by stations in good standing.
- Vehicles certified by stations with a higher Follow-up Pass Rate (FPR) failed at a lower rate at roadside compared to those with a lower FPR.
- Vehicles certified by STAR stations failed at a lower rate at roadside compared to those certified at non-STAR stations.

Estimation of additional benefits

- BAR and California Air Resources Board (CARB) staff estimate that the Smog Check Program could provide an additional 44 tons per day reduction of exhaust and evaporative emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG) and exhaust emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) if all inspections were conducted at high-performing stations.
- An emission reduction of 44 tons per day is the equivalent of removing over 7 million light-duty vehicles from daily operation.

Potential reductions of ROG + NOx



Highlights of 50 state review (1 of 2)

- California operates the 3rd largest inspection and maintenance (I/M) network in the U.S., behind New York and Pennsylvania
 - Over 8,000 licensed stations in operation in CYs 2024-25, and an average annual test volume of 1,500 vehicles per station
- Several states have suspended emissions testing of their light-duty fleets:
 - Washington (January 1, 2020)
 - Tennessee in all counties (January 14, 2022)
 - Idaho (July 1, 2023)

Highlights of 50 state review (2 of 2)

- Despite New Hampshire's desire to end their program, it was extended through the end of 2026
- Five contractors currently support state I/M programs
 - Opus/Gordon Darby – 22 states and Washington, D.C.
 - Applus+ Technologies – four states
 - Parsons Engineering – three states
 - Worldwide Environmental – two states
 - Voyatek – one state (California)
- Washington, D.C. and 13 states conduct safety inspections along with emissions testing

General recommendations (1 of 3)

- Tighten criteria for STAR certification
- Streamline processing of legal cases
- Incorporate “reasonable test duration” timing into DAD 2.0
- Supplement roadside emissions surveys with paper audits of Smog Check repair orders
- Centralize testing of the pre-OBD fleet

General recommendations (2 of 3)

- Coordinate with CHP on expanded use of citations for Vehicle Code section 27156 violations (i.e., modified emissions control systems)
- Review and revise directed vehicle criteria
- Invite OEMs to participate in Continuous Testing Pilot
- Place OBD Inspection System (OIS) kiosks in rural areas of the state
- Estimate the impact of pre-inspection repair and the efficacy of repairs on failure rates

General recommendations (3 of 3)

- Coordinate with CARB on surveillance testing and modeling of baseline and excess on-road emission rates
- Make the printing of a Vehicle Inspection Report optional for a vehicle that passes a Smog Check inspection

Roadside recommendations

- Eliminate diesel testing
- Increase participation in roadside inspection
- Examine site selections
- Coordinate with CARB to test diesels and vehicles with evaporative issues
- Minimize time between Smog Check and audit tests
- Conduct repair order audit
- Print passing survey results only upon request

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Report

- This annual report to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a compilation of statistics on the California Smog Check Program.
- The report is used by the EPA to examine regional differences in vehicle inspection and maintenance programs across the country.
- In every odd numbered year (e.g., 2025) the report also includes a summary of changes in program design, procedures, regulations, and other program milestones or features.
- CARB is required to submit the report to the EPA by July 31 each year.

Report publication

- The SCPR can be found on BAR's website at www.bar.ca.gov.
- A copy of the US EPA report can be obtained by contacting CARB.

Thank you

For comments and questions, please contact:

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www.bar.ca.gov



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