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CRUISE SHIP DUMPING AND TRASH BURNING BANNED IN CALIFORNIA

Sacramento, CA – California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger made good on promises to protect the oceans by signing cruise ship dumping and air pollution bills sponsored by Bluewater Network. The bills will stop cruise ship dumping of sewage and dirty water and prohibit burning of garbage within three miles of the California coast. The trio of bills impose the strongest state protections from cruise ship pollution in the nation.

“These bills will protect our coast without slowing the state’s cruise ship boom,” said Assemblyman Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto). “It’s a win-win for California’s environment and economy.”

“With these bills, the Governor has terminates cruise ship dumping and burning without rolling up the welcome mat for cruise ships,” said Teri Shore of Bluewater Network.

The bills, AB2093-Nakano, AB2672 and AB471-Simitian were passed by California lawmakers by a wide margin and named priority bills by environmentalists statewide.

The bills were needed because cruise ship calls to California jumped by 50 percent during the past two years without any new protections from increased air and water pollution. About 45 ships are scheduled to make more than 600 calls on state ports in 2004. Cruise ships are equipped with large holding tanks that allow them to hold wastes until far off-shore without changing current operations.

Cruise ships are like floating cities that carry as many as 5,000 passengers and crew. On a typical one-week voyage, each ship generates more than 200,000 gallons of sewage and 1 million gallons of graywater from sinks, showers and kitchens. All of it ends up in the ocean, some treated, some not. Federal laws now allow dumping in state waters.

AB 2093 (Nakano) Prohibits cruise ships from discharging graywater from kitchens, laundries and showers into state waters. Currently graywater is unregulated and can be discharged anywhere, including ports and harbors.

AB2672 (Simitian) Prohibits cruise ships from dumping sewage (treated or untreated) into state waters. Currently, cruise ships can dump treated sewage anywhere, including into ports and harbors. Untreated sewage can be dumped just outside state waters. Treated wastewater is not monitored or tested to determine if it meets effluent standards. If necessary, the state will apply to the US EPA to secure the no-discharge policy.

AB471 (Simitian) Prohibits cruise ships from burning garbage, paper, sludge and any other materials in on-board incinerators while operating within three miles of the California coast.

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