Amid the general relief that California's legislature has finally passed a budget, our state's (and nation's?) chief air & climate conscience makes some serious objections:

> California's proposed budget contains a major provision that would weaken air pollution regulations while saving the construction industry millions of dollars.
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> The measure, largely overlooked in a public debate focused on taxes, would delay requirements for builders to retrofit bulldozers, scrapers and other soot-spewing equipment, slashing by 17% the emissions savings that health advocates had hoped to achieve by 2014.
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> "There are people who will die because of this delay," said Mary D. Nichols, chairman of the state Air Resources Board.

See the LA Times for more. Many have speculated about the ways that California's budget crisis, and the recession more generally, might delay progress on environmental and climate regulation. Looks like we're there. Whether this particular regulatory delay will actually hurt or help our economy is up for debate, of course, with Nichols again leading the charge for the naysayers:

> "It is sad in an era where most people understand that strong environmental standards actually help California's economy as well as public health" . . . The rollback of the diesel standards would eliminate the sort of "green jobs" that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has championed, Nichols said.

I haven't yet figured out what other green rollbacks may have made their way into the final budget — anyone else know?