



June 18, 2014

Dear Senator/Representative,

As health and medical organizations, we see the Clean Air Act as a proven public health tool to reduce dangerous air pollution known to make people sick and cut short lives. We urge you to stand up for the health of your constituents against these dangers. Please oppose all legislative efforts to block, weaken, or delay clean air protections, specifically the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s proposed limits on carbon pollution from existing power plants, known as the Clean Power Plan.

EPA's proposed carbon pollution limits for existing power plants, are long overdue. Existing power plants are the single largest source of carbon pollution in the country. Even with the steps that are in place to reduce air pollution, evidence warns that higher temperatures due to carbon pollution and climate change will increase the risk of unhealthy air in large parts of the United States. More air pollution means more childhood asthma attacks and complications for others with lung disease, including increased risk of premature death.

The recent National Climate Assessment highlights other critical health impacts from carbon pollution and climate change that are already being felt today across the nation, and are likely to pose even greater threats in the future, including: heat waves, wildfires, extreme changes in weather, such as drought and excessive precipitation, flooding, dust storms, and the spread of infectious diseases. All of these events have very serious public health consequences that we cannot ignore, especially for thousands of your constituents: including people with lung diseases such as asthma, chronic bronchitis and emphysema; children, whose airways are still developing; people who work or exercise outdoors; seniors; low-income communities; and many more.

EPA must adopt strong carbon limits, not just for the future, but to help relieve the harm these plants are doing today. EPA projects that once the Clean Power Plan takes effect, it will save up to 6,600 lives and prevent 150,000 asthma attacks each year, because cleaning up carbon pollution will reduce other pollutants from power plants, such as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen

oxides, and mercury. According to the American Lung Association 2014 “State of the Air” report, more than 146 million people in the United States, (47 percent of the U.S. population), live in counties that already have unhealthy levels of pollution linked not only to asthma attacks and premature death, but also heart attacks, lung cancer, developmental harm to infants and children.

Prevention not only saves lives and improves health, it saves money. Consistent with the 40-year history of Clean Air Act protections, the benefits of the EPA’s proposed Clean Power Plan will far outweigh the costs. In fact, every \$1 invested in cleaning up carbon pollution is expected to provide up to \$7 in health and economic benefits. According to a recent report from the White House Office of Management and Budget, for 21 major air rules EPA issued from 2002 until 2012, the estimated benefits range from \$109.4 billion to \$629.1 billion, while the estimated costs of those rules were between \$29.4 billion and \$35.3 billion.

The Clean Power Plan strengthens healthy air protections, and is an important step forward in fulfilling the promise of the Clean Air Act. During the 120-day public comment period, all stakeholders will have an opportunity to voice their views on the proposed rule. EPA is required to consider and respond to all comments before the Clean Power Plan is made final. We urge you to support healthy air protections and oppose riders or other legislation that would block, weaken or delay carbon pollution limits under the Clean Air Act.

Sincerely,

American Lung Association

American Academy of Pediatrics

American College of Preventive Medicine

American Public Health Association

American Thoracic Society

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Health Care Without Harm

National Association of Hispanic Nurses

National Association of County & City Health Officials

Public Health Institute

Trust for America’s Health