

**Statement for the Record  
Administrator Scott Pruitt  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

**Hearing: Big Relief for Small Business: Legislation Reducing  
Regulatory Burdens on Small Manufacturers and Other Job  
Creators**

**Energy and Commerce, Environment Subcommittee  
United States House of Representatives  
September 13, 2017**

Chairman Shimkus, Ranking Member Tonko, members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony on H.R. 1917, Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kiln (BRICK) Act; H.R. 1119, Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment (SENSE) Act; HR 453, Relief from New Source Performance Standards Act; and HR 350, Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports (RPM) Act. Although the Administration does not have an official position on these bills, I am very supportive of the committee's efforts to provide additional flexibilities, extensions, and clarifications for industries complying with various Clean Air Act regulations.

To put these four significant bills in perspective, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently released its annual report on air quality, showing the significant progress the United States has made to improve air quality across the country. "Our Nation's Air: Status and Trends Through 2016" documents the steady and significant progress made in improving air quality across America, over more than 45 years under the Clean Air Act. This progress is often overlooked; the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies has called it "The Greatest Story Seldom Told," explaining that "Through the Clean Air Act's framework of cooperative federalism, hard-working state

and local air agencies have been responsible for tremendous progress in virtually every measure of air quality.”

EPA’s most recent report highlights that, between 1970 and 2016, the combined emissions of six key pollutants dropped by 73 percent. This progress occurred while the U.S. economy continued to grow, Americans drove more miles, and population and energy use increased. A closer look at more recent progress shows that between 1990 and 2016, national concentration averages of harmful air pollutants decreased considerably:

- Lead (3-month average) ↓99 percent
- Carbon monoxide (8-hour) ↓ 77 percent
- Sulfur dioxide (1-hour) ↓ 85 percent
- Nitrogen dioxide (annual) ↓ 56 percent
- Ground-level ozone (8-hour) ↓ 22 percent
- Coarse Particulate Matter (24-hour) ↓ 39 percent and Fine Particulate Matter (24-hour) ↓ 44 percent.<sup>1</sup>

I support the committee’s legislative efforts to provide added flexibility and extended timelines that important local industries require to continue to thrive and power local economies, since they too are our partners in reducing emissions and improving air quality. Without businesses’ compliance with Clean Air Act regulations, we would not be able to report nearly as much success and progress to date reducing concentrations of harmful air pollutants. EPA is familiar with the concerns these bills seek to address and continues to work with stakeholders on the parts that fall within existing authorities of the Clean Air Act. Having the committee provide legislative action, even in instances where the agency itself might review the existing regulation in the future, is helpful in our effort to determine Congressional intent. I believe that we as a nation can be both pro-energy and jobs, and pro-environment. We don’t have to choose between the two. I

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<sup>1</sup> Fine Particulate Matter monitoring began in 2000, so trend is between 2000-2016. See <https://gispub.epa.gov/air/trendsreport/2017/#highlights> for more information about air trends.

think our nation has done better than any nation in the world at making sure that we do the job of protecting our natural resources, and protecting our environment, while also respecting economic growth.

We at EPA are responsible for carrying out the will of the Congress with the authorities you provide us; the authority that EPA has, is the authority given to it by Congress. It is a critical responsibility for our great country, and I will ensure my agency faithfully implements these bills if enacted. I take this responsibility very seriously and am committed to working with our state, tribal and local partners to achieve meaningful health and environmental improvements with all available authority provided to EPA by law.

For example, I am working diligently to strengthen relationships with the states, tribes and affected industries and engage in a meaningful dialogue to support efforts to improve local air quality. Since being confirmed as Administrator, I have met with half of the governors across the country, from Alaska to Texas to Indiana to Guam, and numerous businesses and industry representatives. These meetings are critical for understanding the challenges facing state officials and their citizens, and hard-working business owners, and for working together towards our common goals. In response, I have instructed my staff to assess flexibilities for states, tribes and industries to comply with regulations in a manner that is supportive of air quality improvement efforts, without interfering with local decisions or impeding economic growth.

The EPA appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony. We stand ready to offer our technical assistance to the Committee should the Committee have any further questions.