



The Honorable John Shimkus
Chairman, Subcommittee on Environment
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Attn.: Kelly Collins, Legislative Clerk
via Email

March 23, 2018

Dear Chairman Shimkus:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify at the February 14, 2018 hearing entitled “New Source Review Permitting Challenges for Manufacturing and Infrastructure.” This letter responds to the additional question from the Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., which states: “Rep. Griffith questioned your earlier comment regarding the costs of pollution control technology, but did not give you an opportunity to respond.” The question thereafter inquires about the benefits and costs of New Source Review.

My response is as follows:

I strongly disagree with Mr. Griffith’s characterization of my testimony as it relates to the worries of Southwest Virginians. Indeed, I am from Mr. Griffith’s district, and am especially concerned that air pollution from facilities that attempt to evade New Source Review imposes significant costs not just on people from the Southern Appalachian region, but on citizens across the nation. The bill that Mr. Griffith has sponsored, H.R. 3127, would permit massive increases in air pollution by allowing major sources of pollution to evade New Source Review through a mathematical sleight-of-hand.¹

The costs of pollution control should not be understood as costs at all, but rather, a partial means of ensuring that polluters pay for harms they cause, rather than imposing those costs on others. Air pollution is a negative externality costing Americans billions of dollars, as my written testimony documents. The benefits of curbing air pollution exceed the costs by a ratio of more than 30 to 1.² These benefits include hundreds of thousands of lives saved, millions of individuals’ ability to work, and millions of children’s ability to attend school. Any myopic focus on costs of pollution control technology alone represents yet another sleigh-of-hand that should not serve as the foundation for policymaking.

¹ See JOEL EISEN, EMILY HAMMOND, ET AL., ENERGY, ECONOMICS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT 266 (4th ed. 2015) (illustrating why accounting for emissions on an hourly basis undercounts total

² ENVTL. PROTECTION AGENCY, THE BENEFITS AND COSTS OF THE CLEAN AIR ACT FROM 1990 TO 2020, 7-1 (Mar. 2011).

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this response and would be happy to respond to any additional questions.

Sincerely yours,

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Emily Hammond
Glen Earl Weston Research Professor of Law

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