

**Testimony of
Daniel M. Dolan-Laughlin,
Volunteer for the American Lung Association in Illinois
Before the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Regarding the Proposed Power Plant Carbon Pollution Standard
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Chicago, Illinois**

Good morning. My name is Daniel M. Dolan-Laughlin. I am appearing here today to testify how pollution controls, like the carbon pollution limits the EPA is proposing today, impact millions of people who suffer from respiratory illnesses. Although, I am not a scientist, nor a doctor, I am someone who suffered, suffered nearly fatally from COPD. I am someone who received a double-lung transplant; and someone for whom pollution controls still, and will mean the difference between life and death.

I suffered from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, for decades. As the disease progressed, I could no longer work. My quality of life declined. Slowly at first, then more rapidly as I approached end-stage. I required round-the-clock oxygen therapy to perform even basic functions. Eventually, I wound up in the hospital with end-stage COPD. My doctor told me words no one is ever prepared to hear—that I had only several days left to live without mechanical support. And yet, a miracle occurred. Through organ donation, I was given the gift of life and hope... a healthy pair of lungs.

Even with this life-changing gift, I must be vigilant about pollution levels. Poor air quality during high ozone days forces me to stay indoors. Pollution, literally, makes me sick. I depend on healthy air to breathe and live. And there are many, many others who depend on it too!

I'm not here simply to talk about my own battle for healthy air. I'm here as an advocate for everyone with lung diseases. Asthma sufferers, COPD patients, and others rely on pollution controls to simply get through another day. Lung disease impacts people young and old, rich and poor, all over the country. Every single one of them deserves the right to breathe healthy air. On behalf of these people, I support EPA's limits on carbon pollution from new power plants. By having the courage to implement this rule, you will reduce the carbon pollution and smog that

threatens millions of people like me every day.

Carbon pollution builds up in the atmosphere and scientists believe that as this rapidly grows, it will increase temperatures leading to formation of ground level ozone or smog. Breathing in ozone causes problems for all kinds of people, not just ones with COPD. It can cause wheezing and aggravate asthma attacks, and COPD exacerbations requiring costly hospitalizations. Children who inhale ozone have a higher chance of developing lung diseases or reduced lung function as adults. And since power plants are one of the largest sources of carbon pollution, it is only right that the EPA impose this standard.

Although I strongly support the EPA's power plant carbon pollution limits, I want these limits also to be enforced on existing power plants, not just new ones. There are more than 5,000 existing power plants spewing carbon and other pollutants into our atmosphere on a daily basis. Most of these existing power plants are fueled by coal. A single coal-fired power plant releases an average 3.7 million tons of carbon pollution; imagine the impact of our 580 existing coal-fired power plants on the next generation. We cannot ignore the impact of carbon pollution from these existing power plants.

The current rule not only exempts existing power plants, but, it ignores the fact that they can—and will likely—continue to pollute the air for future generations. Unlike COPD, there is no identified “end-stage” for a power plant. In Illinois, the Wood River power plant has been operating since 1948, and that is by no means a record! There is a power plant in Indiana that's been running since 1903. Existing power plants aren't disappearing, and they most certainly should be included in carbon pollution limits.

Every day, I wake up with a miraculous gift—a set of healthy lungs and life. I cannot take my gift of new lungs for granted, and I ask that the EPA not take it for granted, either. I urge you to implement this rule, and get to work on carbon pollution standards for existing power plants too.

Thank you for your time and your attention.