

Albert A. Rizzo, M.D.
Chair
National Board of Directors

July 18, 2011

Ross P. Lanzafame, Esq.
Chair-Elect
National Board of Directors

The Honorable William M. Daley
Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

H. James Gooden
Past-Chair

Christine L. Bryant
Secretary/Treasurer

Dear Mr. Daley:

Geri Reinardy, M.P.A.
Speaker
Nationwide Assembly

Now that the July 29, 2011 deadline to complete the review of the ozone health standard nears, we are disappointed to see that the Business Roundtable has called on the President to delay the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) reconsideration of the long-awaited health standards for ground level ozone. The final announcement has been delayed several times since the Obama Administration first promised to reconsider the Bush Administration's weak health standard. We hope you agree that the evidence to support a stronger standard compels the President to reject any calls for further delays.

Marcia D. Williams, Ed.D.
Speaker-Elect
Nationwide Assembly

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Charles D. Connor
President &
Chief Executive Officer

Ozone is a powerful respiratory irritant that makes breathing difficult, triggers asthma attacks, increases the need for hospital admissions and emergency room visits, and increases the risk of premature death. Independent scientists have repeatedly recommended to EPA that the current ozone health standard fails to protect public health and needs strengthening. The EPA review looked at more than 1,700 peer reviewed studies. The scientific evidence overwhelmingly supports a more protective ozone standard.

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Most recently, the independent Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee unanimously advised EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson on March 30, 2011 that the scientific evidence strongly supports a new primary ozone standard within the 60 – 70 parts per billion range. The EPA estimates that setting a standard at the lower end of that range would save more than 10,000 lives each year.

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To be plain, the delay being sought by the Business Roundtable and their allies means more Americans will get sick and more will die due to exposure of unhealthful levels of air pollution.

www.LungUSA.org

Forty years ago, a bipartisan Congress adopted the Clean Air Act requiring air quality standards be set solely on the basis of what is necessary to protect public health. A unanimous decision of the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed this in 2001. Cleanup costs are appropriately considered when states and EPA determine the best, most efficient way to meet the health standards.

The American Lung Association conducted a bi-partisan poll in June 2011 ([enclosed](#)) to assess the attitudes of the American public with respect to EPA setting a more protective ozone standard. The poll found an overwhelming 75 percent of voters support EPA setting stricter limits on smog. Even though the Business Roundtable and others have been pushing for members of Congress to interfere with EPA's process, our poll found that 68 percent of voters oppose Congressional action that would impede EPA from updating clean air standards.

Our poll also specifically asked the public the argument being pushed by the Business Roundtable that updating the health standards would hamper economic growth. We found that 65 percent say that stricter standards on air pollution will not damage our economic recovery, with 54 percent believing that updates are likely to create more jobs, not less.

In sum, the request for the delay that the Business Roundtable is making of the President is an "ask" that he cannot square with the American public. The reality is that millions of Americans currently live in areas where the air is unhealthy, and steps to protect them are not being taken. Following the advice of the Roundtable will lead to unnecessary illness and death and is not in compliance with the law.

As we did when we joined leading health and medical groups in a letter to the President in May ([enclosed](#)), we call on you to ensure that EPA moves forward with an ozone standard that protects public health with an adequate margin of safety, as the Clean Air Act requires EPA to do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CD Connor".

Charles D. Connor
President and CEO

Enclosures

