



September 19, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the undersigned public health and medical organizations, we write to state our strong opposition to any efforts that hinder the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) ability to implement the Clean Air Act.

As you move forward with the Fiscal Year 2012 appropriations process, we urge you to provide the American people with the protection they need from dangerous air pollutants. To that end, we urge you to reject the approach taken by the House of Representatives and to, instead, protect public health and not include devices such as amendments, policy riders and/or funding restrictions that prevent EPA from updating emission standards for life-threatening pollution.

Budget cuts and/or policy riders would impact EPA's ability to implement the Clean Air Act, a law that protects public health and reduces health care costs for all by preventing thousands of adverse health outcomes, including: cancer, asthma attacks, strokes, emergency department visits, hospitalizations and premature deaths. A rigorous, peer-reviewed analysis, *The Benefits and Costs of the Clean Air Act from 1990 to 2020*, conducted by EPA, found that the air quality improvements under the Clean Air Act will save \$2 trillion by 2020 and prevent at least 230,000 deaths annually.

The public supports EPA's efforts to implement and update the Clean Air Act. A recent bipartisan survey, conducted for the American Lung Association by the Republican firm Moore Information and Democratic polling firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, indicates that those pushing riders or otherwise interfering with EPA are out of touch with voters. The survey shows that over seventy percent of voters do not want Congress to stop the EPA from setting stricter pollution limits and sixty-six percent of voters would prefer that EPA set pollution standards, not Congress.

As you proceed with the appropriations process, we ask you to support full implementation of the Clean Air Act and resist any efforts to weaken, delay or block progress toward the continued implementation of this vital law.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Public Health Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Trust for America's Health

American Lung Association
American Thoracic Society
Physicians for Social Responsibility

cc. United States Senate