

American Lung Association
American Public Health Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Trust for America's Health

July 14, 2011

VIA FACSIMILE

Chuck Gray,
Executive Director
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners
1101 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Gray:

On behalf of the undersigned public health and medical organizations, we write to express our strong opposition to **Resolution EL-3: *Promoting Congressional Action for Increased Flexibility for the Implementation of EPA Rulemakings***. Without question, this resolution will delay improvements in public health and hinder the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) ability to implement the Clean Air Act.

During your deliberations next week, we ask that you take into account the tremendous public health costs associated with fossil-fuel power plants. The regulations that the EPA has recently finalized and proposed are years overdue. In the case of the Power Plant Mercury and Air Toxics proposal, the standards for these plants are nearly 20-years past due. The updated standards that EPA is implementing are designed to protect public health and reduce health care costs for all by preventing thousands of adverse health outcomes, including: cancer, asthma attacks, strokes, emergency department visits, hospitalizations and premature deaths.

The recently finalized Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will improve air quality for more than half of the states. This rule will save up to 34,000 lives each year and prevent over 400,000 asthma attacks, 19,000 admissions to the hospital or emergency department and 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks.

Implementation of and compliance with the proposed Power Plant Mercury and Air Toxics Rule will result in the annual prevention of approximately: 17,000 premature deaths; 11,000 heart attacks; 120,000 cases of childhood asthma symptoms; 12,000 hospitalizations and emergency room visits; and 11,000 fewer cases of acute bronchitis among children.

Congress first required EPA to clean up toxic air pollution from industries in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. Coal-using electric utilities have successfully delayed having to comply since then. It is time for these plants to get clean and for public health gains to be realized.

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. We urge you to reject EL 3 and stand up for public health.

Thank you for considering our position. Should you want to discuss our position in greater detail, please do not hesitate to contact Peter Iwanowicz of the American Lung Association at (202) 785-3355.

Sincerely,

American Lung Association
American Public Health Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Trust for America's Health

cc: Garry Brown, Chair of the Electricity Committee
Jeanne M. Fox, Chair of the Energy Resource and the Environment Committee
Timothy A. Simon, Chair Natural Gas Committee