



March 24, 2015

Dear Senator:

The undersigned public health and medical organizations urge you to strongly oppose any legislation or amendments that would block, weaken or otherwise hinder the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's work to update and enforce strong limits on dangerous air pollution.

With the passage of the Clean Air Act more than 40 years ago, Congress made a commitment that the air in the United States would be safe for all to breathe, based on the best evidence from the health and medical science. This set our nation on a path toward safe, healthy air for all – including children, the elderly, and those with lung or heart disease. Thanks to that commitment, we have made tremendous progress to reduce pollution.

Implementing and enforcing the Clean Air Act is a strong investment in the health of our nation. Reducing air pollution saves lives and reduces health care costs by preventing thousands of adverse health outcomes, including cancer cases, asthma attacks, strokes, heart attacks, emergency department visits, and hospitalizations. 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.

With benefits like these, it is no surprise that the American public supports EPA efforts to reduce pollution, and believes overwhelmingly that Congress should not interfere with EPA scientists as they work to protect public health. A recent bipartisan poll by the American Lung Association found that more than two-thirds of voters enter the debate supporting safer, stricter standards. An overwhelming 68 percent of voters across party and demographic lines support EPA setting stricter smog pollution standards to protect public health.

Despite the success of the Clean Air Act and the strong public support for continued protection, some in Congress have proposed legislation that would dismantle or delay Clean Air Act safeguards. Doing so would undermine the health of our nation, and could expose millions of Americans to unsafe levels of air pollution, increasing the number of missed work and school days due to illness, hospitalizations for respiratory and cardiovascular distress, and premature deaths due to air pollution.

Therefore, 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 these vital public health protections. Further, we ask that you speak out publicly in defense of the fundamental human right to breathe healthy air.

Sincerely,

Allergy and Asthma Network
American Lung Association
American Heart Association
American Public Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Health Care Without Harm
National Association of County & City Health Officials
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
Trust for America's Health