

Statement of Stephen J. Nolan
Chair, Board of Directors American Lung Association
before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Fiscal Year 2010
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
April 23, 2009

Summary: Funding Recommendations (Dollars in Millions)

US Environmental Protection Agency	
Federal Stationary Source Regulation	\$33
Federal Support of Air Quality Management	\$115
State and Local Air Agencies (Sec 103,105 Grants)	\$270.3
Diesel Emission Reductions (STAG)	\$200
Air Toxics Implementation	\$30
Asthma – Indoor Air Quality	\$26

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I am Stephen Nolan, volunteer Chair of the American Lung Association. I am honored to testify on in support of the Environmental Protection Agency’s clean air program. I am an attorney in private practice in Baltimore, Maryland and have been a volunteer for the American Lung Association for a decade. The American Lung Association was founded in 1904 to fight tuberculosis and today, our mission is **to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease.** We accomplish this through research, advocacy and education. Today I would like to discuss with you today the need for increased funding in EPA’s FY2010 budget for its Clean Air Program. This program will improve public health and more effectively protect those with lung disease from the adverse effects of air pollution. As Congress addresses global warming and energy issues through exciting new technology, cleaner energy sources and new policies, there is an opportunity to ensure that the air is cleaner. We urge this committee to ensure that the Clean Air Act’s promise of clean, healthy air for all Americans is kept.

Lung Disease and Air Quality

Lung disease is a significant health problem in the United States. Lung disease is the third leading cause of death in the United States - responsible for one in every six deaths. More than 33 million Americans suffer from a chronic lung disease. According to the National Institutes of Health, lung diseases cost the U.S. economy an estimated \$153.6 billion annually. Nearly all lung diseases are impacted by air pollution. How well or poorly our lungs perform depends on the quality of the air we breathe, making the impact of air pollution inescapable. Air pollution remains a primary contributor to the burden of respiratory diseases in our healthcare system as well.

The Clean Air Act has proven to be a powerful tool to improve the quality of our nation’s air. From 1970, when Congress passed the Clean Air Act, until 1990, the average emissions of SO2 nationwide dropped by 40 percent, nitrogen oxide emissions dropped by 30 percent and carbon monoxide dropped by half. Ambient or outdoor ozone levels were 15 percent lower on average. However, much remains to be done. Millions of Americans live in counties that do not meet

current Clean Air Act health standards, our Nation's Capitol included. The EPA estimates that 158.5 million Americans in 2007 live in areas where they are exposed to unsafe levels of air pollution.

Setting National Ambient Air Quality Standards

The Clean Air Act requires EPA to review the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide and lead every five years. Historically, EPA has not met the deadlines for these reviews and has been obligated to complete such reviews under court order. In 2006, EPA failed to strengthen the annual standard for fine particles, despite the near unanimous recommendation of the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee. On February 24, 2009, the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that the EPA needed to reconsider the scientific evidence for much stronger particulate matter standards, sending their 2006 standards back to EPA for corrective action. In 2008, EPA set national air standards for ozone that ignored the unanimous agreement among the independent scientific advisory committee on the need for much more protective new standards, despite the Clean Air Act's clear requirements to establish science-based standards that protect public health. EPA has committed to review all the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and meet their statutory deadlines. **To accomplish this work and to meet the agencies obligations, we recommend a 25 percent increase in the Federal Stationary Source Regulation budget to \$33 million.**

Meeting National Standards

Efforts to clean up power plants and other measures to implement pollution cleanup have not moved forward in large part because electric utilities and EPA took steps to delay or circumvent Clean Air Act requirements.

EPA has still not completed rules to implement the 1997 ozone or PM standards. Both standards have since been revised. EPA must not be permitted to continue to drag its feet and fail to provide guidance to states to meet the national standards. EPA also must move forward with regulations to clean up power plants and move forward with additional rules to regulate other large emission sources. **To meet help meet these standards, we recommend a 25percent increase in the federal support of air quality management budget to \$115 million.**

Funding for State and Local Air Agencies and Air Pollution Monitoring

State and local air pollution control agencies are on the front lines in the effort to improve air quality across the nation. These agencies will be called on to adopt and enforce a range of new emissions reduction programs designed to meet the needs of each area that violate the standards. State and local air pollution agencies need additional resources to meet the obligation to implement the Clean Air Act. One area in need of significant resources and attention from this committee is the air pollution monitoring network... Monitors provide the most reliable and consistent information on air pollution in our communities. Monitoring tracks both the levels of pollution in the outside air as well as emissions from specific sources. Monitoring also enables policymakers and the public to see what measures are effective and where air quality management efforts have fallen short. Unfortunately, states have recently had to reduce their already limited existing network of monitors and staff to accommodate cuts in funding. However, even before those cuts, the monitoring network had been reduced, weakening the ability to identify air pollution problems and track emissions. Further, emerging science warns

that the air quality in areas with no monitoring carries serious health risks, like the areas adjacent to major highways or in poorer neighborhoods. Without monitors in place, pollution in those areas will not be tracked and effectively reduced. To protect populations at risk and to assess the efficacy of pollution control programs, EPA must work with scientists and state officials to lower the costs of monitoring and expand its reach. **We strongly urge the committee to increase funding for the State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program to \$270 million.**

Full Funding for Diesel Retrofits

The American Lung Association thanks this Committee for funding \$300 million for diesel emission retrofits in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This investment will save lives and improve the air quality.

Diesel pollution kills. Researchers have found that adults and children show increased health risks associated with living or working in close proximity to busy roadways. Children are especially vulnerable to the effects of traffic-related air pollution. Studies show children exposed to higher levels of traffic generated air pollution face smaller lung function and worsened asthma. In addition, many components of diesel emissions have been found to be carcinogenic.

Over the past decade, EPA has issued new regulations that will significantly reduce emissions from new diesel engines used in trucks, buses, heavy equipment and other vehicles. In March, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced steps EPA is taking with the International Maritime Organization to clean up pollution from ocean going vessels. We commend EPA for all these actions. However, it will take many years to replace the oldest and dirtiest vehicles with new ones that meet new more stringent federal emissions standards for diesel engines. **We support funding the full authorization, as set in Diesel Emission Reduction Act of 2005, at \$200 million per year for FY 2010.** Investing in diesel retrofits provides immediate benefits to public health and the environment. This program is vitally needed to help more rapidly reduce the level of diesel emissions nationwide while the diesel fleet gradually is modernized through normal turn-over.

Reduce Air Toxics

Power plants, cement plants, chemical plants and other major industrial facilities emit vast quantities of mercury, lead, arsenic, dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls and other highly toxic substances that can cause cancer, birth defects and other devastating health effects. Congress mandated highly protective standards for these pollutants, but the standards EPA has set fall far below legal requirements. EPA needs to redo its outdated and unlawful standards for air toxics to ensure that they reduce emissions by the maximum degree that is achievable and adequately protect public health. In order to complete this work, we support funding air toxics implementation at \$30 million.

Indoor Air: Asthma

We thank the committee for its support of the asthma program at EPA. Nearly 23 million Americans suffer from asthma. Air pollution can trigger asthma attacks both indoors and outdoors. However, since most Americans spend a majority of their day indoors, indoor air quality is critical to the health and disease management for people with asthma. Despite the efforts of this committee the indoor air program addressing asthma has been subject to inappropriate reductions. The programs funded by the Indoor Air program raise awareness about

asthma and environmental factors that trigger asthma attacks; help people with asthma and their families manage environmental triggers in their homes; work to reduce children's exposure to indoor asthma triggers at schools and day care centers and promote environmental management as a component of medical and health care asthma management practices. The American Lung Association is proud to partner with EPA in this important work. **We strongly urge the committee to fund the asthma program for FY 2010 at least \$26 million.**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the recommendations of the American Lung Association. Every day we are fighting for air -- clean, healthy air for all Americans to breathe. A robust Environmental Protection Agency air pollution program is vital to our success.