

Statement of the Paul G. Billings
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American Lung Association
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Fiscal Year 2012
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
May 20, 2011

Summary: Funding Recommendations (Dollars in Millions)

US Environmental Protection Agency	
Taking Action on Climate Change and Improving Air Quality	\$1,103.9
• Federal Stationary Source Regulation	\$34.1
• Federal Support of Air Quality Management	\$141.4
• Clean Air Allowance Trading Program	\$30.6
• Federal Vehicle and Fuels Standards	\$100.6
• Climate Protection Program	\$127.8
• State and Local Air Quality Management (STAG)	\$305.5
○ Air Monitoring	\$15.0
• Diesel Emission Reductions	\$50.0
Human Health Risk Assessment	\$45.7
Reducing Risks from Indoor Air	\$20.8
Indoor Air: Radon Program	\$5.8
Research: Air, Climate and Energy	\$108.0

The American Lung Association is pleased to support the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) program to improve the nation’s air. 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 urge the Committee to support ensuring that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has the necessary resources to protect the public health from air pollution. Protecting the public from the health threats of pollution is a core mission of the EPA. In March, the EPA released a report that documents the tremendous health benefits of the Clean Air Act. According to the report, in 2010 alone the reductions in fine particle and ozone pollution from the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments prevented more than 160,000 premature deaths, 130,000 heart attacks, 13 million lost work days and 1.7 million asthma attacks.¹ Despite this tremendous success, much work remains to ensure each American has air that is safe and healthy to breathe. Our 2011 *State of the Air* report showed that nearly over half the nation—154.5 million people live in areas where the air is unhealthy.²

The public expects EPA to implement the Clean Air Act and strongly opposes Congressional interference in the law’s implementation. In February, we released a bipartisan public opinion poll that shows 69 percent of voters support EPA updating Clean Air Act standards on air

pollution. The survey shows that 79 percent of voters support stricter limits on mercury, 77 percent support stricter limits on smog, 74 percent support stricter limits on carbon and 74 percent support tougher fuel efficiency standards for heavy duty trucks.³

Implementing the Clean Air Act to protect health and save lives is a tremendous responsibility and the EPA workload is vast. In 2012, we expect EPA to update health-based air quality standards; implement rules to clean up toxic pollution from major sources such as power plants; clean up toxic pollution from automobile tailpipes; aggressively enforce the law to ensure compliance and protect the public; support state and local air pollution cleanup; continue research on the health impacts of air pollution; improve air pollution monitoring; and ensure that the Clean Air Act is implemented in a way that protects the most vulnerable. As a nation, we need EPA to be able to do all of these things.

Congress must ensure that EPA moves forward to implement the Clean Air Act. We urge the Committee to pass an FY 2012 bill free from any policy riders.

The American Lung Association would like to highlight for you some key provisions of the President's FY 2012 budget that provide additional focus on protecting vulnerable populations. The budget includes a \$2 million increase in funding for Civil Enforcement to reduce toxic air pollution around schools and within at-risk communities. Since children are especially vulnerable to the health impacts of toxic pollution, we are heartened to see this budget increase.

We are pleased to see the President's budget increase support for the **Air Quality Management Program** to improve pollution monitoring and analysis at the fence lines of polluting facilities. People who live adjacent to and near major sources of pollution often face the greatest health risk. Increases of more than \$3 million as part of the Air Toxics Initiative and almost \$3 million as part of the Healthy Communities initiative will help improve the understanding of community-wide impacts of toxic air pollution and ultimately lead to better protection.

We support the President's budget increase of nearly \$7 million to fund **Federal Stationary Source Regulations**. These funds will support the updating of air pollution health standards that tell local communities when the air is unhealthy to breathe, as well as the setting of air toxics standards that will clean up arsenic, lead, acid gases, formaldehyde and other toxic pollutants currently emitted across the nation. In March, EPA proposed new mercury and air toxic standards for oil and coal-fired power plants. This proposal will save an estimated 17,000 lives per year in 2016. It is vital that EPA complete these lifesaving rules on time and begin their implementation.

We strongly support increased funding **for state and local air pollution agencies**. 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 put in place the safeguards set under the Clean Air Act. These agencies will adopt and enforce a range of new emissions reduction programs designed to meet the needs of each area. State and local air pollution agencies need additional resources to protect the health of their communities. Key to this is the investment in air pollution monitoring. Improving the nation's air pollution monitoring network will provide better information to enhance health protection.

We strongly support EPA's planned work to update tailpipe standards. **Light duty cars and trucks** remain a significant source of air pollution. This work is vital to correct for any adverse air quality impacts that may result from increased use of renewable fuels.

We also support EPA's continued work under the Clean Air Act **to control greenhouse gases**. It is clear that EPA is taking a careful and common sense approach to addressing this global threat. Climate change will bring serious adverse health consequences. Scientists warn that the buildup of greenhouse gases and the climate changes caused by it will create conditions, including warmer temperatures, which will increase the risk of unhealthy ambient ozone levels. Higher temperatures can enhance the conditions for ozone formation. Even with the steps that are in place to reduce ozone, evidence warns that changes in climate are likely to increase ozone levels in the future in large parts of the United States.

We strongly support EPA's **air pollution research program**. Research is essential to improve the understanding of the health effects of air pollution. Sound science underscores all of EPA's work. Continued investment in research is vital to increase that level of knowledge and inform future agency action.

The American Lung Association opposes cuts in the President's Budget to the widely supported **diesel emission reduction (DERA) program** that was reauthorized in late 2010. Twenty million old diesel engines are in use today that pollute communities and threaten workers. Immense opportunities remain to reduce diesel emissions through the DERA program. Please restore funding to the \$50 million level.

We also strongly oppose cuts to the EPA's successful indoor air program that works to reduce asthma attacks and lung cancer. Although this program is almost completely voluntary, EPA has demonstrated that creative leadership and collaboration with nongovernmental partner organizations can yield big results in protecting the public in the places where they spend the vast majority of their time. In particular, the low cost, voluntary Indoor Air Quality Tools For Schools program must not be eliminated. *Tools for Schools* has succeeded in improving environmental conditions and reducing asthma triggers in schools across the country, but more schools need this help. Please fund this program at least \$20.8 million.

For forty years the Clean Air Act has charged EPA to protect the public from air pollution and fulfill the promise of air that is clean and healthy for all to breathe. **We urge the Committee to ensure that EPA is meeting the required deadlines and updating standards to reflect the best science with the maximum health protection.** 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.

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. [*The Benefits and Costs of the Clean Air Act from 1990 to 2020*](#). Washington, D.C., March 2011.

² American Lung Association. [*State of the Air 2011*](#). Washington, DC. April 2011.

³ American Lung Association. [*Clean Air Survey*](#). Washington, DC. February 16, 2011