

As Prepared for Delivery
Comments of Diana Van Vleet
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On
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Implementation Plan Addressing Regional Ozone Transport for the 2015 Ozone National
Ambient Air Quality Standard
Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0668

April 21, 2022

Good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Diana Van Vleet and I am the National Director of Outreach & engagement for the American Lung Association's Healthy Air Campaign. I support this ozone transport proposal, and strongly recommend extending it to cover more sources in more areas and requiring them to comply more quickly.

My family is from Virginia and West Virginia, which are both on the list of states with industrial polluters that would have to clean up under this proposal. That's a good thing – not only will we stop contributing to poor air quality in other states, but we'll also clean up these sources of pollution for people in these states and who live nearby.

Right now I live in DC, which just received an "F" for ozone pollution in the "State of the Air" report released today. I am an avid runner and biker, and I am concerned about my health because of how much ozone I must be breathing in in the city. Each spring and summer I worry about elevated ozone levels when I go for a run and I think about the damage it is doing to my lungs.

The precursor of ground-level ozone pollution - nitrogen oxides, or NO_x, are very dangerous to health. NO_x is highly reactive, and it can form into ground-level ozone pollution. Ozone can cause breathing problems, heart problems, and premature death. Long-term exposure can lead to permanently reduced lung function in children and may cause central nervous system, reproductive and developmental harm. NO_x results from fuel combustion in mobile and stationary sources, and it can cause a range of health harms, including airway inflammation, cough and wheezing, and a greater likelihood of asthma attacks, emergency department visits and hospital admission for people with lung disease.

Everyone should be concerned about limiting their exposure to ground-level ozone pollution, but some groups are even more at risk. Several of my close friends here in DC are pregnant, and when I go on walks with them I think about how they may be breathing in ozone pollution, increasing their risk of their baby being born with low birthweight, and of stillbirth. No one should have to face these fears while going outside for a walk.

I urge EPA to strengthen and finalize this proposal to control emissions from the vast array of sources that put public health at risk from ozone pollution.

I urge EPA to expand the covered sources further to better protect public health and require sources comply more quickly; to require controls to be as stringent as technologically

feasible, both to ensure compliance with the 2015 ozone standards and to avoid falling further behind when the next standards come out; and finally to act quickly to finalize this overdue proposal into law. Thank you.