

June 7, 2016

Dear Senator/Representative,

On behalf of our millions of members, the undersigned 118 organizations urge you to oppose the “Ozone Standards Implementation Act” (H.R. 4775, S. 2882). The innocuous-sounding name is misleading: this legislation would actually systematically weaken the Clean Air Act without a single improvement, undermine Americans’ 46-year right to healthy air based on medical science, and delay life-saving health standards already years overdue.

This bill’s vision of “Ozone Standards Implementation” eliminates health benefits and the right to truly safe air that Americans enjoy under today’s law. First, the legislation would delay for ten years the right to safer air quality, and even the simple right to know if the air is safe to breathe. Corporations applying for air pollution permits would be free to ignore new ground-level ozone (aka smog) health standards during these additional ten years. For the first time the largest sources of air pollution would be allowed to exceed health standards. The bill would also outright excuse the parts of the country suffering the worst smog pollution from having backup plans if they do not reduce pollution. The most polluted parts of the country should not stop doing everything they can to protect their citizens’ health and environment by cleaning up smog pollution.

This bill is not content to merely weaken and delay reductions in smog pollution. It also strikes at our core right to clean air based on health and medical science. The medically-based health standards that the law has been founded on for 46 years instead could become a political football weakened by polluter compliance costs. This could well result in communities being exposed to unhealthy levels of smog and soot and sulfur dioxide and even toxic lead pollution. The bill would also double the law’s five-year review periods for recognizing the latest science and updating health standards, which are already frequently years late; this means in practice that unhealthy air would persist for longer than ten years.

The legislation also weakens implementation of current clean air health standards. The bill expands exemptions for “exceptional events” that are not counted towards compliance with health standards for air quality, even when air pollution levels are unsafe. This will mean more unsafe air more often, with no responsibility to clean it up. Requirements meant to ensure progress toward reducing smog and soot pollution would shift from focusing on public health and achievability to economic costs. Despite the bland name “Ozone Standards Implementation Act,” this bill represents an extreme attack on the most fundamental safeguards and rights in the Clean Air Act.

Since 1970, the Federal Clean Air Act has been organized around one governing principle—that the EPA must set health standards based on medical science for dangerous air pollution, including smog, soot and lead, that protect all Americans, with “an adequate margin of safety” for vulnerable populations like children, the elderly and asthmatics. This legislation eviscerates that principle and protection. We urge you to oppose H.R. 4775 and S. 2882, to protect our families and Americans’ rights to clean air.

Sincerely,

350KC  
350 Loudoun  
Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Alton Area Cluster UCM (United Congregations  
of Metro-East)  
Brentwood House

California Latino Business Institute  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Chicago Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Citizens for Clean Air  
Clean Air Watch  
Clean Water Action  
Cleveland Environmental Action Network  
Climate Action Alliance of the Valley  
Connecticut League of Conservation Voters  
Conservation Voters for Idaho  
Conservation Voters of South Carolina  
Dakota Resource Council  
Earth Day Network  
Earthjustice  
Earthworks  
Environment Iowa  
Environment America  
Environment Arizona  
Environment California  
Environment Colorado  
Environment Connecticut  
Environment Florida  
Environment Georgia  
Environment Illinois  
Environment Maine  
Environment Maryland  
Environment Massachusetts  
Environment Michigan  
Environment Minnesota  
Environment Missouri  
Environment Montana  
Environment Nevada  
Environment New Hampshire  
Environment New Jersey  
Environment New Mexico  
Environment North Carolina  
Environment Ohio  
Environment Oregon  
Environment Rhode Island  
Environment Texas  
Environment Virginia  
Environment Washington  
Environmental Defense Action Fund  
Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2)  
Environmental Law & Policy Center  
Ethical Society of St. Louis  
Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions

Florida Conservation Voters  
Fort Collins Sustainability Group  
GreenLatinos  
Health Care Without Harm  
Iowa Interfaith Power & Light  
Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society  
KyotoUSA  
Labadie Environmental Organization (LEO)  
Latino Donor Collaborative  
League of Conservation Voters  
League of Women Voters  
Maine Conservation Voters  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
Michigan League of Conservation Voters  
Moms Clean Air Force  
Montana Conservation Voters Education Fund  
Montana Environmental Information Center  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
NC League of Conservation Voters  
Nevada Conservation League  
New Mexico Environmental Law Center  
New York League of Conservation Voters  
Northern Plains Resource Council  
OEC Action Fund  
Ohio Organizing Collaborative, Communities  
United for Responsible Energy  
Oregon League of Conservation Voters  
Partnership for Policy Integrity  
PennEnvironment  
People Demanding Action, Tucson Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine  
Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Los Angeles  
Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Arizona  
Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, SF Bay Area  
Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Tennessee  
Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Wisconsin  
Chapter  
Powder River Basin Resource Council  
Public Citizen  
Public Citizen's Texas Office  
RVA Interfaith Climate Justice Team

Safe Climate Campaign  
San Juan Citizens Alliance  
Sierra Club  
Southern Environmental Law Center  
Sustainable Energy & Economic Development  
(SEED) Coalition  
Texas Campaign for the Environment  
Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services  
Texas League of Conservation Voters  
The Environmental Justice Center at Chestnut  
Hills United Church  
Trust for America's Health  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment  
Valley Watch  
Virginia Organizing  
Virginia Interfaith Power & Light  
Voces Verdes  
Voices for Progress  
Washington Conservation Voters  
Western Colorado Congress  
Western Organization of Resource Councils  
Wisconsin Environmental Health Network  
Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters  
Wisconsin Environment  
Wyoming Outdoor Council