

**Clean Water Action * EDF Action * Hip Hop Caucus * Interfaith Power & Light
League of Conservation Voters * National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council * Save EPA * Sierra Club**

April 10, 2018

Dear Senator,

On behalf of our millions of members, we write to urge you to oppose the nomination of Andrew Wheeler to be Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), especially given the major ethics scandals embroiling Administrator Scott Pruitt. The mission of the EPA is [“to protect human health and the environment.”](#) In contrast, Andrew Wheeler has dedicated his career to weakening environmental protections, serving as the lobbyist for numerous fossil fuel clients. Additionally, he sat on the boards of the pro-dirty energy Washington Coal Club and National Energy Resources Organization. Andrew Wheeler’s hostility to environmental regulation and conflicts of interest make him an entirely inappropriate choice for EPA’s number two leadership role.

Wheeler’s portfolio of clients included fossil fuel companies such as Murray Energy – the largest privately-owned coal company in the country. In 2017 he lobbied on behalf of a U.S. subsidiary of a Canadian energy firm to open areas of the Bears Ears Monument to potential uranium mining claims. Wheeler’s supporters among regulated entities are celebrating his nomination. For example, Jack Gerard, the CEO of the American Petroleum Institute, has endorsed Wheeler’s nomination. Even as they support Wheeler’s nomination, these entities are also advocating EPA to dismantle environmental protections.

Throughout his career, Andrew Wheeler has openly opposed climate protections. He has referred to the historic Paris Climate Agreement as a “sweetheart deal” for China. While serving as an aide to Senator Inhofe, Wheeler worked to pass the reckless “Clear Skies Act,” which would have undermined the Clean Air Act and dangerously delayed critical improvements in our air quality. This bill failed in committee due to bipartisan opposition.

Our public health and environmental protections are already under attack by an administration that rejects sound science and prioritizes industry interests over setting safe, science-based standards. Wheeler’s nomination to the second-highest position in the EPA would embolden and accelerate Scott Pruitt and Donald Trump’s anti-environment, anti-public health agenda.

Furthermore, in light of serious and ongoing concerns regarding the current Administrator’s ability to effectively lead the agency, the choice for EPA’s number two leadership role is especially critical. The EPA needs a Deputy Administrator that will not continue the pattern of service of polluters over public health, and the Senate needs to take a fresh look at a nominee whose responsibilities could be greater than originally anticipated.

Our health and our environment are too important to be placed in the hands of a fossil fuel lobbyist serving an Administrator who has already demonstrated he is unable to effectively protect our communities and natural resources. We urge that you oppose Andrew Wheeler's nomination to be Deputy Administrator of the EPA.

Sincerely,

Clean Water Action

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