

**Center for Biological Diversity * Clean Water Action * Defend Our Future
Franciscan Action Network * Greenpeace * Interfaith Power & Light
League of Conservation Voters * National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council * Oil Change USA * Pivot Point
Rachel Carson Council * Sierra Club * Waterkeeper Alliance**

February 4, 2019

Dear Senator,

On behalf of our millions of members, we write to urge you to oppose the nomination of Andrew Wheeler to be Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 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 and sitting on the boards of pro-dirty energy groups like the Washington Coal Club. In his time serving as Acting Administrator he only continued the environmental attacks undertaken by his predecessor, the ethically-challenged Scott Pruitt. Andrew Wheeler's hostility to environmental safeguards and conflicts of interest make him an entirely inappropriate choice to lead the EPA.

Since Scott Pruitt's resignation under a cloud of scandal in July of 2018, as Acting Administrator Wheeler has continued efforts to dismantle the agency and weaken environmental protections. Some of his very first acts in the position were to reduce enforcement of vehicle pollution standards (for "glider kits") and finalize the weakening of safeguards for coal ash dumps. He has led efforts to weaken clean car standards and revoke state authority for stronger standards; proposes that regulating the neurotoxin mercury and other toxic air pollutants from power plants is not "appropriate or necessary" despite industry already complying with the standards; and is leading proposals to weaken the Clean Water Act and other laws.

Furthermore, he has failed to take meaningful action on some of the most toxic chemicals that harm Americans like methylene chloride, PFAS, lead, chlorpyrifos, and NMP, or to carefully evaluate and control top priority new and existing chemicals. He has not released EPA's analysis of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and its economic benefits and he has not indicated his support for the amendment that would help make progress on hydrofluorocarbons and the development of new, climate-friendly technologies.

He has even refused to reverse extreme and damaging actions of former Administrator Pruitt such as his proposed rule and policies to censor science to make EPA science reviews industry-friendly, and has followed this up by attempting to reverse science by placing someone who denies decades of air pollution science in charge of the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee. In short, Wheeler's time in charge of the agency has been no better for public health than under Scott Pruitt.

Wheeler's portfolio of clients prior to his time in the EPA 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. The EPA needs an Administrator that will break the pattern of service of polluters over public health, but this former fossil fuel lobbyist 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 Administrator of the EPA.

Sincerely,

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