

The new congressional majority has made the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency one of its chief adversaries, vowing to obstruct at every turn the agency's efforts to reduce air pollution that threatens human health. The collateral damage of this highly politicized campaign could be thousands of American lives every year.

Rep. John Carter (R-TX) is trying to build support for a congressional resolution (H.J. RES 9) that could lead to the deaths of thousands of Americans every year. Rep. Carter wants to undo health protections recently finalized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that will save lives and billions of dollars in health care costs every year by cutting toxic air pollution—particularly mercury—from cement plants.

Cement plants are among the dirtiest industrial facilities in the country, and they have managed to escape controls for more than a decade. Rep. Carter -- who doesn't have a single cement kiln in his district --wants that free ride to continue, but it must end.

Tell your representative to oppose Rep. Carter's campaign to help these big polluters. Instead, our congressional leaders should support the right of all Americans to breathe clean air.

Background on Cement Plant Pollution-

Cement plants emit tremendous amounts of mercury, a dangerous neurotoxicant that can impair a child's ability to think and learn. Mercury is so toxic that it only takes 1/70th of a teaspoon to contaminate a 20-acre lake to the point where fish are unsafe to eat. Many cement plants emit hundreds of pounds of mercury every year.

They also emit vast quantities of other toxic pollutants, including lead, chromium, arsenic, particulate matter, hydrochloric acid, and dioxins. These pollutants can cause cancer and other catastrophic health effects. The EPA has calculated that cement plants' emissions of particulate matter alone cause up to 2,500 premature deaths every year.

The EPA's new health protections will at long last bring cement plants' toxic pollution under control, slashing emissions of mercury, hydrochloric acid, and particulate matter by more than 90 percent. The technology to reduce this pollution is available and has been for years, is affordable to cement companies, and will be installed, operated, and maintained by American workers.

When the proposal to cut cement kilns' toxic pollution was up for public comment, Rep. Carter stated no objections to the EPA's action. Now, he is leading an effort that, if successful, would place thousands of lives at risk and waste billions of dollars every year. Even worse, if Carter succeeds, the EPA would be prevented from ever pursuing a similar pollution standard in the future.

Rep. Carter's resolution must be stopped.

Tell your representative to reject this outrageous attempt to exempt one of the dirtiest industries in America from controlling its toxic pollution. We have a right to breathe, and our representatives should stand up for it.