

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 21, 2011

The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20640

Dear Administrator Jackson:

Forty years after adoption of the Clean Air Act, toxic air pollution from power plants continues to harm the health of our children and our communities. We commend you for taking action to clean up this serious threat to public health through the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed Power Plant Air Toxics Rule. This rule will save thousands of lives and avoid tens of thousands of illnesses through the use of available and cost-effective pollution controls.

Toxic air pollution from power plants remains a major unregulated source of air pollution in the United States. According to EPA's National Emissions Inventory, power plants emit 84 hazardous air pollutants and are the single largest source of mercury, hydrochloric acid and arsenic releases into the air. These plants emit 386,000 tons of hazardous air pollution annually.

EPA estimates that the Power Plant Air Toxics Rule will prevent the release of 91% of the mercury in coal, reduce emissions of acid gases from power plants by 91%, and cut sulfur dioxide emissions from power plants by 53%, as well as reducing many other hazardous air pollutants.

As a result of these reductions, the Power Plant Air Toxics Rule will save up to 17,000 lives every year. It will also prevent 11,000 heart attacks and 120,000 asthma attacks annually, prevent 12,200 hospital admissions and emergency room visits, and avoid 850,000 lost work days annually. These and other serious adverse health effects can occur hundreds of miles downwind of a power plant or in adjacent communities. Low-income and diverse communities of color often are especially impacted by these toxic emissions, and children and senior citizens are our most vulnerable populations. EPA estimates that the rule will provide up to \$140 billion each year in health benefits and that for every dollar spent to reduce this pollution, we will receive \$5-\$13 in health benefits.

Pollution control technology to meet these requirements is already being used by hundreds of power plants across the nation. New technology promises to provide the needed reductions at far lower costs than were previously estimated. A recent analysis by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, estimated that 1.46 million jobs, or about 290,000 jobs on average in each of the next five years, would be created by capital

investments in pollution controls and construction of new plants as the country transitions to a cleaner, modernized generation fleet.

For more than 40 years, the Clean Air Act has protected public health and strengthened America's economy. We encourage you to build on this record of success by reducing toxic air pollution from power plants.

Sincerely,

Lois Capps

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Larry J. Puckerman

Steven A. Rothman

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