



October 13, 2011

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

We the undersigned organizations represent a diverse coalition of public health, small business, civil rights, and consumer groups and strongly urge you to oppose any and all efforts to undermine clean air. Bills such as H.R. 2401, H.R. 2250, H.R. 2681, H.R. 2273, H.R. 1633, S. 1392 and S.J. Res. 27 repeal limits on pollutants such as mercury, arsenic, soot, smog, carbon dioxide, and coal ash. Blocking clean air protections will not only damage public health, it will also hurt the economy.

The Clean Air Act has provided tremendous value for Americans, with benefits outweighing costs by more than 3:1. Since the passage of the Clean Air Act, concentrations of air pollutants in U.S. cities have dropped significantly. The six most common air pollutants have decreased by more than 50 percent. Air toxics from large industrial sources, such as chemical plants, petroleum refineries and paper mills, have decreased nearly 70 percent, while new cars are more than 90 percent cleaner. At the same time, U.S. gross domestic product has tripled, energy consumption has grown 50 percent, and vehicle use has increased almost 200 percent.

The health benefits are clear. In 2010 alone, the Clean Air Act prevented 160,000 premature deaths, 130,000 heart attacks, 13 million lost work days, and 1.7 million asthma attacks. But these significant gains are now being threatened and our air still has a long way to go before it is truly healthy to breathe. Children, seniors, communities of color, and low-income Americans are especially vulnerable to the ill health effects of dirty air.

Investing in cleaner and more efficient technologies, including pollution control infrastructure can strengthen the economy. Failing to curb pollution threatens the fragile economy by undercutting families' ability to pay their bills. Pollution-related illnesses increase costs for private and public health coverage, including employer-based health insurance, Medicare and Medicaid. Failing to prevent pollution-caused illness and disease increases suffering and health care costs.

Small business owners, our nation's chief job creators, understand that smart policies like the Clean Air Act lead to innovation, which will help them save money in their own businesses and create new market opportunities. A national opinion poll released Sept. 20 by Small Business Majority found 76 percent of small business owners support the EPA's regulation of carbon emissions under the Clean Air Act. Even in states with large manufacturing sectors support was high. In Ohio, 73 percent of respondents supported the EPA regulating carbon emissions and 75 percent did so in Michigan.

The American people deserve both financial prosperity and a livable environment—cleaner air delivers both. Thank you for your service to the American public and your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

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