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Contact: Piper Crowell, (415) 342-2770, piper@environmentamerica.org
Shelley Vinyard, (202) 461-2465, shelley@environmentamerica.org

On Valentine's Day, the Public Loves Clean Air and Clean Water

Today, Environment America presented the Environmental Protection Agency Administrator, Lisa Jackson, with more than 5,000 Valentine's cards from Americans expressing their love for clean air and clean water. These cards come as the EPA is moving forward on rules to protect our families from toxic air pollution coming from power plants and other facilities and a guidance to restore Clean Water Act protections to America's waterways.

"I love clean water because it's better for everyone! All of the plants, animals, and people hugely benefit from clean water. Our ecosystems function better and everyone who drinks clean water feels better," wrote Stephanie from Ann Arbor, Michigan on her Valentine card.

On the other hand, power plants and other facilities show Americans no love by spewing hundreds of thousands of pounds of toxic pollutants like mercury, lead, and arsenic into our air every year. These toxic chemicals not only put children at risk of more asthma attacks, learning disabilities, and developmental disorders, but also quite literally cause broken hearts in the form of heart attacks and cardiovascular disease.

Fortunately, the EPA is set to issue rules in the coming months to stop big polluters from releasing these toxic chemicals into our air.

"We are so grateful that Administrator Jackson is making sure that love is the only thing in our air on Valentine's Day," said Shelley Vinyard, Environment America's Toxics Advocate.

"We know people love their local waterways and clean water is an incredibly popular issue with the public. That's why this Valentine's Day we are showing the EPA that people across the country want our water protected," stated Piper Crowell, Environment America's Clean Water Advocate.

Unfortunately, the health of our waters is at risk. Loopholes in the Clean Water Act allow polluters to dump without consequence into the very streams that provide our drinking water.

“As the EPA moves forward on restoring Clean Water Act protections to critical waters we know it isn't going to be all hugs and kisses. Polluters are going to fight this every step of the way. So we are counting on the EPA to stay true to protecting our waters and not leave us brokenhearted,” concluded Crowell.

EPA's authority to move forward on both clean air and clean water rules has already been attacked. The House Republican leadership's proposed continuing budget resolution, released on Friday, February 11th, bars EPA from taking any action to clean up carbon dioxide and other global warming pollutants from coal-fired power plants, oil refineries and other stationary pollution sources. The resolution also prevents EPA from restoring Clean Water Act protections for many of the nation's most vulnerable waterways.

“Members of Congress who love clean air and clean water and want to ensure the health of their constituents should stand by EPA this Valentine's Day, and not end a long and fruitful relationship,” said Vinyard.



Lucy Leavitt delivers Valentine cards to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson (USEPA photo by Eric Vance)

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Environment America is a federation of 29 citizen-based state organizations working toward a cleaner, greener, healthier future.