

Oppose S.J. Res. 37 - Using the Congressional Review Act to Void Life-Saving Standards on Toxic Air Pollution

Senator Inhofe recently filed a Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution (S.J. Res. 37) to void health standards reducing mercury and other toxic air pollution from power plants and permanently block EPA from re-issuing similar safeguards. This resolution would be a disastrous and unprecedented attack on our children's health and America's air quality.

Enormous Benefits of Mercury and Air Toxics Standards for Power Plants

EPA's Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) for the first time set national limits on mercury, arsenic, lead, acid gases and other toxic air pollution from power plants that burn coal and oil. These standards are more than a decade overdue.

Mercury is a dangerous neurotoxin that harms children's developing brains, and power plants are the largest industrial source of mercury in the U.S. EPA estimates that starting in 2016, the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards *every year* will prevent:

- up to 11,000 premature deaths;
- nearly 5,000 heart attacks;
- 130,000 asthma attacks;
- 5,700 hospital and emergency room visits; and
- 540,000 days when people miss work and school.

These standards have *annual* estimated benefits of \$37 to \$90 billion, compared to only \$9.6 billion in compliance costs – meaning that for every dollar spent to reduce pollution, Americans get \$3-9 dollars back in health benefits.

The standards will also create jobs. EPA estimates that the standards will create approximately 46,000 short-term construction jobs and 8,000 long-term jobs in the utility sector.

Deadly Implications of a CRA Resolution on Mercury and Air Toxics Standards

Not only would a CRA resolution void all of the health benefits of the MATS, it also would **bar** EPA from issuing *any standards* in the future that are substantially similar.

This means the health toll above would continue every year, with EPA stripped of the tools to address those hazards. Americans would be denied, indefinitely, the benefit to their families and communities of reducing 90% of mercury and 88% of the acid gas pollution from power plants – the largest and dirtiest sources of mercury and other toxic air pollution.

Without these standards, power plants would be allowed to continue to spew these dangerous pollutants while other industrial sources have worked to clean up their own pollution.

Finally, the Inhofe CRA resolution unfairly penalizes utility companies that invested money to modernize their plants and clean up mercury and other toxic air pollution, while granting amnesty to the laggards that disregarded forthcoming laws and kept polluting and harming our children's health. Many of the nation's largest power companies have invested millions to prepare for these standards, and companies like PSEG have said that the MATS standards "provide much needed certainty to invest in capital-intensive projects such as power plants," whereas delay "will only perpetuate uncertainty where clarity is needed." Power companies support these standards, and our children's health requires them.

We Urge You to Reject S.J. Res. 37 - the CRA Resolution to Void Mercury and Air Toxics Standards for Power Plants: Protect our Children's Health