

**Center for Biological Diversity • Clean Water Action • Earthjustice •  
Environment America • Environmental Law and Policy Center • League of  
Conservation Voters • League of Women Voters • National Audubon Society  
• Natural Resources Defense Council • Sierra Club • Southern  
Environmental Law Center • Union of Concerned Scientists • US Climate  
Action Network**

October 12, 2011

**RE: OPPOSE H.R. 2273, the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act and all  
anti-environment amendments**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our millions of members, activists, and supporters, we urge you to oppose strongly the suite of bills contained in House Majority Leader Eric Cantor's legislative agenda memo that would block the EPA's ability to clean-up life-threatening pollution. This extreme, ideological agenda will not create jobs, but it will cost lives. It prioritizes the narrow interests of politically connected polluter industries over the broader goal of safeguarding the lives and health of our children, communities, and families.

Rep. Cantor's August 29<sup>th</sup> memo lays out his plan this fall to repeal a host of recent and/or upcoming environmental standards that will protect public health by limiting dangerous pollutants like toxic mercury, arsenic, soot, smog, carbon dioxide, and coal ash from the nation's largest pollution sources, including coal plants, oil refineries, factories, and cement plants. This includes H.R. 2401, H.R. 2250, H.R. 2681, H.R. 2273, H.R. 1633, and any other bills that weaken our environmental public health standards.

The Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act (H.R. 2273), scheduled to be considered on the floor later this week, endangers the health and safety of thousands of communities, and places the nation's drinking water and communities near power plants at risk. Coal ash is a dangerous waste product left over after coal is burned. It often contains toxic substances such as arsenic, hexavalent chromium, lead, mercury and many other toxic chemicals. Across the country, billions of tons of coal ash have been dumped in ponds and landfills, where they leak these toxic compounds into drinking water sources. Because there is no federal protections for coal ash, communities are left to the mercy of weak or non-existent state standards governing its disposal.

Let us be absolutely clear: compromising the health of tens of thousands of Americans will not create more jobs. Poisoning the air our children and our families breathe will not stimulate the economy. Burdening the American people with hundreds of billions of dollars in health and welfare costs will not lead to sustained economic growth.

Instead, Majority Leader Cantor's so-called "jobs agenda" will sacrifice tens of thousands of American lives a year. It will lead to more heart attacks, more respiratory illnesses, and more children in the hospital hooked up to respirators. It will mean more exposure to toxic mercury, a brain poison that particularly impacts young children and the unborn.

The Cantor Agenda will also hurt the economy and make it tougher for families to make ends meet. It will force Americans to collectively miss millions of days of work each year to care for sick family members or for themselves. It will force Medicare and Medicaid to waste billions of taxpayer dollars treating preventable illness and disease caused by pollution, and will further burden American families and businesses with out-of-pocket medical costs and higher health insurance premiums.

Now more than ever, the American people need their members of Congress to work together to solve the nation's problems in a bipartisan manner. We urge you to reject HR 2273 and other polluter-led attacks on public health and instead focus on real solutions that grow the economy, not cost lives.

Sincerely,

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