

## **An Open Letter to President Obama from Groups Protecting Public Health**

July 21, 2011

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned organizations and our members and supporters – representing the health, medical, consumer, faith, community-based, environmental -communities – urge you to protect public health and the environment by supporting more protective standards for ground-level ozone (smog).

Ozone, the primary component of smog, is the nation's most pervasive air pollutant. Millions of Americans causes premature death. The effects are worse for sensitive populations including children, the elderly, and people with asthma and other respiratory illness.

We call for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set a primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone at the most protective end of the range recommended by the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), and a secondary standard sufficient to protect forests and plants throughout the nation from ozone damage as recommended by CASAC and the National Park Service. These standards, based on health science, are required to be set at a level that protects public health with an adequate margin of safety.

After extensive review, CASAC on March 30, 2011, unanimously advised EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson that the scientific evidence strongly supports a new primary ozone standard. The EPA estimates that setting a standard at the lower end of the range recommended by CASAC would save over 10,000 lives annually.

Throughout the years, the Clean Air Act has built a solid science and health foundation, making it one of the nation's most effective public health laws. By saving millions of lives, avoiding millions of cases of pollution-related illness, and preventing millions of lost work days, the Clean Air Act has also been an economic success story. The total benefits of the Clean Air Act between 1990 and 2010 exceeded total costs by an estimated 35 to 1.

Efforts to reduce ground-level ozone concentrations have also been successful, with levels declining in many cities, including Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Houston and Milwaukee over the last decade. But millions of Americans including children, the elderly and people of color are still regularly exposed to smog levels that are unhealthy; as a result hundreds of thousands more are sick and tens of thousands die.

Now that the science is clear that the standards for ground-level ozone are too low in order to protect public health, EPA has an obligation to follow the science. The agency should do so promptly by mid-summer as promised, in order to start the long overdue process of delivering clean air to the American people.

We urge you to act now and support truly protective ozone standards.

Sincerely,

**Alabama**

American Lung Association in Alabama  
Cahaba Riverkeeper  
Children's Environmental Protection  
Alliance and Community Forums

**Alaska**

American Lung Association in Alaska  
GillepsieHall Health and Wellness  
Marketing  
Western Resource Advocates

**Arizona**

American Lung Association in Arizona  
Arizona Asthma Coalition  
Arizona PIRG (Arizona Public Interest  
Research Group)

**Arkansas**

American Lung Association in Arkansas

**California**

American Lung Association in California  
California Public Health Association-North  
California Thoracic Society  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Citizen's Coalition for a Safe Community  
Coalition for Clean Air  
COFEM - Consejo de Federaciones  
Mexicanas  
East Yard Communities for Environmental  
Justice  
Energy Independence Now  
Environmental Law Foundation  
Healthy Child Healthy World  
KyotoUSA  
Loma Linda University School of Medicine,  
Division of Neonatology  
Mercy Center for Lung and Esophageal  
Surgery  
Physicians for Social  
Responsibility/Sacramento  
Rose Foundation for Communities and the  
Environment  
SF-Bay Area Physicians for Social  
Responsibility  
San Francisco Asthma Task Force  
Siskiyou County Public Health Dept.

**Colorado**

American Lung Association in Colorado  
Colorado Environmental Coalition  
Colorado Conservation Voters  
National Environmental Health Association

**Connecticut**

American Lung Association in Connecticut  
The Great Land Conservation Trust

**Delaware**

American Lung Association in Delaware  
Pulmonary Associates, Newark Delaware

**District of Columbia**

American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Heart Association  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association in the District  
of Columbia  
American Public Health Association  
American Thoracic Society  
Clean Air Watch  
Clean Water Action  
Community Action Partnership  
Earth Justice  
Energy Action Coalition  
Environment America  
Environmental Defense Fund  
ENE (Environment Northeast)  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
League of Conservation Voters  
National Association of County & City  
Health Officials  
National Hispanic Environmental Council  
(NHEC)  
National Resources Defense Council  
Outdoor Alliance  
Sierra Club  
US Climate Action Network

**Florida**

American Lung Association in Florida  
Common Ground for Conservation  
Voces Verdes

**Georgia**

American Lung Association in Georgia  
Atlanta Bicycle Coalition  
Citizens for Progressive Transit  
Coalition for the Peoples' Agenda  
Earth Covenant Ministry  
Environmental Community Action Inc  
Environment Georgia  
GEORGIA Women's Action for New  
Directions





**Rhode Island**

American Lung Association in Rhode Island  
Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island  
Childhood Lead Action Project  
Rhode Island State Nurses Association  
RICOSH

**South Carolina**

American Lung Association in South Carolina  
Conservation Voters of South Carolina

**South Dakota**

American Lung Association in South Dakota

**Tennessee**

American Lung Association in Tennessee  
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

**Texas**

American Lung Association in Texas  
Downwinders at Risk  
Environment Texas  
Flower Mound Shares  
FracDallas  
Health Professionals for Clean Air  
Trinity- First Weekday Ministries

**Utah**

American Lung Association in Utah  
Breathe Utah  
HEAL Utah  
Utah Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club  
Utah Moms for Clean Air  
Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment  
Wasatch Clean Air Coalition

**Vermont**

American Lung Association in Vermont  
Idle-Free VT Inc.  
Vermont Public Health Association  
Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG)

**Virginia**

American Lung Association in Virginia  
Health Care Without Harm

**Washington**

American Lung Association in Washington  
Climate Solutions  
Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power & Light  
Institute of Neurotoxicology & Neurological Disorders  
Washington Asthma Initiative

**West Virginia**

American Lung Association in West Virginia

**Wisconsin**

American Lung Association in Wisconsin

**Wyoming**

American Lung Association of Wyoming  
Midwest Environmental Advocates  
Saving Our Air Resource  
Wisconsin Environment  
Wisconsin Asthma Coalition