



American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

American Lung Association

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments



Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America



Children's Environmental Health Network



The Medical Society Consortium ON CLIMATE & HEALTH



National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners



National Medical Association



December 13, 2023

The Honorable Michael S. Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan:

The undersigned national health, medical and nursing organizations represent patients, providers and communities across the country that rely on strong federal environmental health safeguards. We are grateful that the EPA has taken on an ambitious agenda since 2021 of updating air standards, placing limits on pollution and transitioning to zero-emission vehicles. We are now urging you quickly finalize key rules that will provide clean air and a healthier environment for all. Our communities are calling on you: don't delay, clean air today.

The need to clean up air pollution and address climate change is more urgent than ever. The Fifth National Climate Assessment and the Lancet Countdown on Climate and Health, both released in November 2023, highlight the dire need to transition away from polluting energy sources. In 2020, fossil fuel combustion accounted for approximately 41.5% of all premature

deaths attributed to human-caused fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) in the US.¹ Climate change is increasing the risk of multiple extreme events occurring simultaneously, exacerbating physical and mental health harms and furthering health inequities.²

The harm of air and climate pollution to the nation's health is clear. Everyone's health is impacted, but children, individuals who are pregnant, older adults and people with heart and lung disease are some of the groups more susceptible to climate change and air pollution. Low-income communities and communities of color are also more likely to face increased exposures to pollution, compounding existing health inequities.

We appreciate the work this administration has done since 2021 to tackle the climate crisis and clean up the air, including signing the largest climate and clean energy investments in history, finalizing strong standards to limit harmful nitrogen oxides from trucks, investing in ending environmental injustices and finalizing strong limits on methane and other pollution from oil and gas sources. We also appreciate the proposals of several additional, crucial clean air rules. The nation now has just a short window of time for these remaining important protections to be finalized.

We urge you to quickly finalize the following key air pollution and climate change measures:

- Much stronger National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter
- Stronger greenhouse gas standards for heavy-duty vehicles
- Stronger multi-pollutant standards for light-duty vehicles
- Stronger limits on mercury and air toxics from power plants
- Limits on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants
- Granting waivers for California's stronger cleaner vehicles emissions programs

We also urge you to move swiftly in your review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone. Stronger ozone standards are urgently needed for health too.

Our health and our climate cannot wait. It's time to take more bold actions to improve air quality and mitigate climate change. We strongly urge you to finalize and begin implementing the strongest possible pollution standards no later than early April 2024. Doing so is necessary to keep the promise of clean air and environmental justice that has been prioritized by the administration.

Sincerely,

Allergy & Asthma Network
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Lung Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association

¹ Lancet Countdown, 2023: 2023 Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change Policy Brief for the United States of America. Beyeler NS, Knappenberger P, Hess JJ, Salas RN. Lancet Countdown U.S. Policy Brief, London, United Kingdom, 20 pp.

² USGCRP, 2023: Fifth National Climate Assessment. Crimmins, A.R., C.W. Avery, D.R. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, B.C. Stewart, and T.K. Maycock, Eds. U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC, USA.
<https://doi.org/10.7930/NCA5.2023>

American Thoracic Society
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Children's Environmental Health Network
Climate for Health
Climate Psychiatry Alliance
Health Care Without Harm
Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Medical Association
Physicians for Social Responsibility