



April 13, 2015

Dear Representative:

The undersigned public health and medical organizations urge you to oppose the “Ratepayer Protection Act,” drafted by Representative Ed Whitfield. Far from protecting Americans, this bill would put lives at risk by delaying and blocking critical clean air protections.

Carbon pollution leads to climate change and threatens Americans’ health. As U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, MD, MBA said during National Public Health Week, “We know that climate change means higher temperatures overall, and it also means longer and hotter heat waves... higher temperatures can mean worse air in cities, and more smog and more ozone. We know that more intense wildfires will mean increased smoke in the air. And we know that earlier springs and longer summers mean longer allergy seasons.”

These impacts of climate change contribute to asthma attacks and other respiratory problems, cases of heat stroke, and premature deaths. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s proposed Clean Power Plan will help the nation take important steps toward protecting Americans’ health from these threats. Not only would the Plan give states flexible tools to reduce the carbon pollution that causes climate change, these crucial tools would also lower other deadly pollutants at the same time, preventing up to 6,600 premature deaths and 150,000 asthma attacks every year by 2030.

Unfortunately, Representative Whitfield’s bill would put lives at risk by dramatically weakening and delaying vital Clean Air Act safeguards. Specifically, the bill allow governors to “opt out” of complying with the final Clean Power Plan. The bill would also prohibit EPA from implementing the Clean Power Plan until all court actions related to the plan are complete, indefinitely delaying these lifesaving protections. Moreover, the bill would prevent EPA from putting a federal pollution cleanup plan in place in a state where a governor refused to comply. Residents of these states – especially those most vulnerable, including children, the elderly, and people with asthma – would not see the health benefits from air pollution reductions that would come with the cleanup plan.

We ask you to prioritize the health of your constituents and oppose Representative Whitfield’s dangerous bill.

Sincerely,

Allergy & Asthma Network
American Lung Association
American Public Health Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Health Care Without Harm
Trust for America’s Health