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AG MADIGAN JOINS COALITION OF 16 ATTORNEYS GENERAL IN OPPOSING ROLLBACK OF AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

Attorneys General Urge Congress to Block Legislation Delaying Ozone Standards and Undermining the Clean Air Act

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan joined a coalition of 16 attorneys general in urging Congress to reject the rollback of critical protective ozone air quality standards.

In letters to the chairmen and ranking members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, the coalition detailed its opposition to the Ozone Standards Implementation Act of 2017, which would substantially delay the ozone standards promoted by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2015 – marking a major step backward in efforts to combat pollution and its negative impact on public health.

“Ozone and air quality standards are simple, common-sense measures that are vital to our nation’s public health,” Madigan said. “Rolling these standards back is shortsighted and dangerous.”

People exposed to elevated levels of ozone suffer from lung tissue damage, as well as aggravation of asthma, bronchitis, heart disease, and emphysema. Children and seniors are particularly susceptible for ozone’s harmful health effects. The 2015 ozone rule is expected to result in vital public health benefits. In fact, the EPA conservatively estimated that meeting the new standards would result in annual public health benefits of up to \$4.5 billion starting in 2025 (not including California), while also preventing approximately:

- 316 to 660 premature deaths;
- 230,000 asthma attacks in children;
- 160,000 missed school days;
- 28,000 missed work days;
- 630 asthma-related emergency room visits; and
- 340 cases of acute bronchitis in children.

In part the letters state:

“This bill would not only delay implementation of more protective ozone air quality standards, but, more broadly, would undermine the mandate in the Clean Air Act (Act) that the national ambient air quality standards for ozone and other criteria pollutants be based on up-to-date scientific evidence and focus solely on protecting public health and welfare. As explained below, these measures would be a significant step backward in combatting the dangers of ozone and other criteria pollutants. In summary, ozone pollution remains a serious and persistent problem for our nation, posing a particular risk to the health of children, the elderly and the sick, as well as individuals who spend time outdoors. Because S. 263 would represent a significant step backward in combatting ozone and other dangerous criteria pollutants, we urge you to oppose the bill.”

Joining Madigan in signing the letters were attorneys general from California, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia, as well as the Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Copies of the letters can be found [here](#).

In addition to this announcement, Madigan recently condemned the federal executive action to potentially eliminate the Clean Power Plan, opposed the drastic budget cuts proposed for the Environmental Protection Agency and joined legal action to advance

federal energy efficiency standards. Madigan has long supported the Clean Power Plan and the legal actions that led to it. Most recently, she joined a broad coalition of states and localities to call on President-Elect Trump to continue the federal government's defense of the Clean Power Plan, urging him to reject "misguided advice" to discard the Clean Power Plan from a group of attorneys general.

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