

**Testimony on EPA's Proposed Rulemaking for
"National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone"
Docket Number EPA-HQ-OAR-2008-0699**

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Good afternoon. My name is Larissa Koehler and I am an attorney with Environmental Defense Fund, a non-partisan, non-profit environmental organization with more than 1,000,000 members nationwide. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Ozone, the main component of smog, is a harmful air pollutant that is associated with adverse health effects like asthma and other respiratory diseases and is even linked to early death. The EPA's proposal to strengthen the current national, health-based standard for ozone to a range that is consistent with the recommendations of our nation's leading scientists and public health and medical professionals is critical to protect the health of our children, families, and communities and to ensure that all Americans know whether the air they are breathing is safe. In finalizing these important public health standards, EDF respectfully urges the EPA to set the standard for ozone at 60 parts per billion, as the scientific record demonstrates that this level would provide the strongest public health protections for Americans.

In 1970, Congress established an effective process in the fight against air pollution. A bi-partisan majority in Congress determined that the nation's health-based air quality standards should be based on public health considerations alone. Then, in determining how to achieve these health standards, states and municipalities thoroughly consider economics in developing the strategies best suited to their own circumstances. This dual system has been time-tested, congressionally mandated, and reaffirmed by the Supreme Court.

The EPA's independent Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) has indicated the current standard is inadequate to protect public health and recommended a standard in the range of 60 to 70 ppb.

CASAC's recommendation and EPA's analysis reflected in the proposal are based on an extensive and compelling body of scientific evidence. Since the last proposal, there have been more than 1,000 new studies that demonstrate the health and environmental harms of ozone. EPA's analysis highlights the clear, profound health benefits of strengthening the ozone standard to 60 ppb. Under a standard of 60 ppb, for example, EPA projects as many as 7,900 fewer deaths, 1.8 million fewer asthma attacks in children, and 9.2 million fewer minor restricted activity days or lost school days. Indeed, EPA estimates at this level of protection the monetized benefits in 2025 will be \$37–75 billion.

Economic Progress and Clean Air Standards

Naysayers that use hyperbolic language when describing the economic impacts of strengthening clean air standards have not produced any credible evidence to support their claims of economic harm stemming from reducing ozone pollution. The US has four-and-a-half decades of implementing the Clean Air Act, while maintaining strong economic growth. In 1997, during another debate over strengthened national ozone standards, Senator Spencer Abraham (R-MI) was among those who claimed that the new standards would have serious economic impacts, he stated: "Dry cleaning establishments, hair salons, and other small businesses will not be able to absorb the increased costs imposed by these regulations." In fact, an EPA analysis instead found that the net societal benefits of the Clean Air Act in its first 20 years were valued at over \$21 trillion dollars. In addition, the EPA projects a net overall improvement in economic growth going forward due to the benefits of cleaner air.

As in the past, our nation has commonsense and cost-effective solutions already moving forward that will help to achieve a more protective ozone standard and restore healthy air. These solutions include clean air measures, supported by the U.S. auto industry, that will dramatically reduce the smog-forming emissions from new cars beginning in model year 2017 and the

landmark Clean Power Plan that will reduce a suite of health-harming emissions from power plants.

Local Impacts

As in the rest of the country, communities in California face high levels of ozone, with the Sacramento area's ozone problem currently designated as "severe" by EPA. The most recent American Lung Association State of the Air Report gave Sacramento an "F" grade on ozone and the Sacramento metro area ranked 5th out of the 277 metropolitan areas ALA examined for high ozone days. We also know that rising temperatures from our changing climate will worsen ozone challenges in some places and that communities will need help reducing ozone pollution now and in the future.

Setting the ozone standard to 60 ppb will help those of us in California and across the country breathe easier.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We will be submitting further technical comments to the EPA.