



March 6, 2023

Dear Senator/Representative:

As you begin the work of legislating in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, the undersigned national health and medical organizations call on you to protect public health by championing clean air. Our coalition of organizations believe that the combined impacts of air and climate pollution are a major public health threat to our communities. Effectively addressing this threat would dramatically improve the country's health and well-being, improve quality of life and advance health equity.

While the nation has made great strides to clean up the air over the last 50 years, air pollution continues to threaten health across the country. Exposure to pollutants like soot (particle pollution), smog (ground-level ozone), nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxides can trigger asthma attacks, worsen lung conditions, lead to wheezing and coughing, developmental and reproductive harm and even premature death.<sup>1</sup> Our organizations strongly support policies that reduce not only greenhouse gases from the power and transportation sectors, but the full range of harmful

<sup>1</sup> American Lung Association. State of the Air. *Health Impacts of Air Pollution*. April 2022  
 <<https://www.lung.org/research/sota/health-risks>>

emissions. We also advocate for policies to drive a nationwide transition to zero-emission transportation and clean, non-combustion electricity.

Dozens of leading public health, environmental health, patient advocacy, healthcare, nursing and medical organizations signed on to the 2021 [Declaration on Climate Change in Health](#).<sup>2</sup> Our organizations recognize that climate change is a health emergency, and declare our collective commitment to action. The science is clear – communities across the nation are experiencing adverse health and mental health impacts due to changing climate conditions. But we also believe that climate change is a health opportunity. Health benefits will be felt far into the future if the nation dramatically reduces greenhouse gas emissions. We can avoid worsening some of the catastrophic impacts we're seeing now, like extreme weather events, wildfires, longer allergy seasons and instances of mental health challenges related to climate change.

The undersigned organizations are also strong supporters of the Clean Air Act. Since its enactment in 1970, the Clean Air Act has helped the nation breathe easier by driving reductions in air pollution. It is imperative that the law remains intact and enforced. The Environmental Protection Agency has authority under the Clean Air Act to protect public health from air pollution. This includes regulations to set enforceable national limits on key outdoor air pollutants, and to reduce emissions from the power, oil and gas and transportation sectors. Our coalition will strongly support regulatory efforts that reduce pollution, and we will strongly oppose any efforts to weaken that authority or the Clean Air Act.

As you continue work in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, we hope that you will use our coalition as a resource. We all work to protect and improve health nationwide. We welcome the opportunity to speak with you further on the various issues and policy proposals we work on, both collectively and individually.

Thank you for the work you do.

Sincerely,

Allergy & Asthma Network  
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Physicians  
American Lung Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Children's Environmental Health Network

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<sup>2</sup> A Declaration on Climate Change and Health. Letter from Health Organizations. January 2021  
<<https://www.lung.org/policy-advocacy/healthy-air-campaign/healthy-air-resources/a-declaration-on-climate-change-and>

Climate for Health

Climate Psychiatry Alliance

Health Care Without Harm

Medical Students for a Sustainable Future

Medical Society Consortium on Climate & Health