

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
Acting Commissioner

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

March 14, 2017

Scott Pruitt, EPA Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters
William Jefferson Clinton Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail Code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

RE: ***Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2016-0596; Response to December 9, 2013, Clean Air Act Section 176A Petition***

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (CTDPH) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposal to deny the Clean Air Act Section 176A Petition filed by nine Northeast States including Connecticut. As a sister agency to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) our mission is to protect and improve the health and safety of the people of Connecticut by promoting the equal enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, which is a human right and a priority of the state. We are disappointed that EPA is proposing to deny this petition.

Connecticut does not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone and has not for decades. As you are aware, the NAAQS are set at levels to protect public health with an added margin of safety. Ozone damages lung tissue and causes chronic respiratory disease such as asthma and other respiratory conditions. In Connecticut, it has been found that children, females, Hispanics, non-Hispanic Blacks, and residents of the state's five largest cities are disproportionately affected by asthma. Asthma is the single most avoidable cause of hospitalization, yet it is consistently one of the most common admitting diagnoses in children. Connecticut is above the national average of asthma sufferers, and in 2014, incurred over \$135 million in acute care charges due to asthma.

It is clear that the ozone levels in Connecticut adversely impact public health and our quality of life. In talking with representatives from DEEP, interstate air pollution transport prevents Connecticut from solving the ozone problem alone. Denial of the petition sets Connecticut up



Phone: (860) 509-7293 • Fax: (860) 509-7295 • VP: (860) 899-1611
410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 340308
Hartford, Connecticut 06134-0308
www.ct.gov/dph

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for failure. It is our hope that EPA demonstrates the necessary leadership to solve this problem for our citizens, and I urge EPA to reconsider and approve the Clean Air Act Section 176A Petition to include Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia, and the remainder of the state of Virginia in the Ozone Transport Region. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Raul Pino". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Raul" being more prominent than the last name "Pino".

Raul Pino, MD, MPH
Commissioner