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Administrator Michael S. Regan
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, our organizations write to urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to quickly set stronger National Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) pollution of no higher than 8 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³) for the annual standard and no higher than 25 µg/m³ for the 24-hour standard. Setting tighter limits on harmful PM_{2.5} pollution—in line with the levels recommended by the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) earlier this year—will protect millions of Americans, including vulnerable populations like children, the elderly, and people with asthma and other respiratory and heart conditions.

Our organizations were pleased that EPA decided to reconsider the PM_{2.5} standard after the previous Administration chose to leave the outdated standard in place. A strong body of scientific and health evidence indicates that the current, outdated standard is not adequately protective of public health. Nearly 48,000 premature deaths are caused each year by PM_{2.5}, and particle pollution exposure causes increased infant mortality, cardiovascular disease, asthma, diabetes, and other cognitive impairments. Additionally, new studies have shown that even low levels of air pollution exposure, including to particulate matter, lead to increased risks of Covid-19 infection¹. The 2022 American Lung Association's "State of the Air" Report found that under the existing standards over 63 million Americans experience unhealthy spikes in daily particle pollution, and more than 20 million Americans experience dangerous levels of particle pollution on a year-round basis². Further illustrating how widespread the PM_{2.5} pollution problem is, based on the most recent official EPA data, more than 132 million people reside in an area with pollution levels that violate the standard levels we recommend. The science demonstrates that their health and wellbeing is suffering from the unsafe air in their communities.

EPA's mission is to protect public health and the environment, and strengthening these standards based on CASAC's recommendation and the abundance of sound scientific and medical evidence will save lives and protect millions of Americans suffering from chronic health issues due to pollution exposure. As is often the case, these health burdens are disproportionately borne by communities of color near heavily polluting facilities and high-traffic roadways. Stronger standards are necessary for righting long-standing environmental and

¹ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2791305?resultClick=1>

² <https://www.lung.org/research/sota>

health injustices faced by fenceline communities, and this reconsideration process gives EPA an opportunity to directly address some of these inequities.

Millions of Americans are depending on EPA to protect their right to clean air, and we urge you to move quickly to finalize stronger, more protective standards, for both annual and short-term particle pollution.

Sincerely,