**CAC Talking Points: “Censoring Science” Proposal**

* Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler is moving forward with Scott Pruitt’s dangerous “censoring science” plan to limit the scientific information EPA can use to identify public health threats and protect us from pollution.
* If Wheeler is serious about restoring the public’s trust in the EPA after Scott Pruitt’s scandal-ridden tenure, he must immediately suspend and review all of Pruitt’s rollbacks of health protections, including all of Pruitt’s attempts to undermine science at the agency. These decisions were irreparably tainted by Pruitt’s more than a dozen ethics scandals and his deep conflicts of interest with corporate polluters.
* Wheeler should start by halting this misguided and dangerous proposal, which would throw shade on the best available science by essentially requiring researchers to make private, personal medical information public in order for the EPA to use their research in its decision making.
* If Wheeler continues to implement Pruitt’s censoring science plan, he will have confirmed that he plans to only work on behalf of polluting industries instead of on behalf of the American people.
* There is nothing secret about the science EPA uses to protect you. The EPA already makes available the scientific studies it relies on to make decisions. But sometimes those studies use private medical data that can’t and shouldn’t be made public.
* This proposal is straight out of the Big Tobacco playbook. It’s intended to cast doubt on scientific studies—including peer reviewed research—that show the dire threat pollution poses to Americans across the country.
* This proposal has been a long-standing priority of lobbyists for the tobacco and fossil fuel industries for years since, just like cigarettes, pollution from smokestacks and tailpipes causes health problems and even leads to death. Those industries want to avoid accountability for the harm they cause by throwing out the scientific evidence.
* Major scientific groups have objected strongly to this proposal - including the authors of reports by the Bipartisan Policy Center and the Administrative Conference of the United States. Pruitt falsely claimed that these reports supported his proposal.
* It’s not surprising that Scott Pruitt, who denied science at every turn, devised this “censoring science” plan. Wheeler should learn from Pruitt’s mistakes and ensure that his policies are based on a sound scientific and technical foundation. Americans will not tolerate another EPA administrator who tries to limit the role of science at EPA and promote an industry-backed agenda that isn't grounded in facts and does nothing to protect public health.
* This proposal means that many studies on populations such as the elderly, young people, and people of color – groups who often suffer disproportionately from pollution – would be excluded from EPA consideration because making the data public could identify the participating individuals.
* Excluding this important data from consideration means that implementing this proposal could even further exacerbate negative environmental impacts on these and other vulnerable communities.
* Congress has repeatedly refused to pass this radical proposal into law. Should Wheeler decide to unilaterally implement it, he would be dramatically overstepping his authority and sidestepping Congress.
* This dangerous proposal is just another way to put polluters and big corporations before people. We shouldn’t have our private personal medical information made public to accommodate corporate polluters who are looking for even more favors from the Trump administration.