

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 20, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

We are writing to request specific information on how the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is collecting air pollution data during the COVID-19 pandemic. Like our constituents and families across the country, we are deeply concerned over growing evidence that high levels of air pollution are significantly exacerbating certain pre-existing conditions that result in COVID-19 complications, and that long-term exposure to air pollution is a large contributing factor to an increase in fatalities. Furthermore, this pandemic is shining a light on the disproportionate and cumulative impacts pollution has on low income and communities of color, who are experiencing staggering rates of mortality from COVID-19 and often lack access to healthcare.

Due to these concerns, it is critical that the EPA do everything it can to ensure that all air-monitoring networks and air monitors are operating. Data generated from these monitors is critical to informing public health protections in general and especially during a global health pandemic.

In order to understand how EPA is guaranteeing the public has the information they need to understand what public health risks they face, we request information from EPA regarding:

1. Whether any air monitors operated or overseen by EPA or used for determining NAAQS or other Clean Air Act compliance are currently shut off, broken, in need of maintenance, inoperable, or otherwise not making air monitoring results available. This includes any air toxics monitors, or any ambient air quality monitors used for NAAQS compliance. If any such air monitors are shut off, broken, in need of maintenance, inoperable, or if monitoring results for any such monitors are not otherwise available, please provide timetables and EPA's plans for restoring them.
2. Whether any air toxics monitors or ambient air quality monitors used for NAAQS compliance were offline or shut down for any period of time since January 31, 2020, the day the Secretary of Health and Human Services declared COVID-19 a public health

emergency. If they were shut down, please detail the specific dates these monitors were not operated and whether they are now operational.

3. Whether EPA has plans this calendar year (2020) to increase the number of ambient or fenceline air toxics monitors or ambient air quality monitors used for NAAQS compliance and where these monitors will be located.
4. Whether EPA has plans this calendar year (2020) to implement fenceline monitoring near any sources of ethylene oxide, and if so where.
5. What actions, if any, EPA plans to take to protect communities where an air monitor shows unhealthy air during the pandemic.

EPA's job is to protect the air we breathe, and that job could not be more important than during a global health pandemic. As a result, we are requesting data showing that the agency is taking the necessary steps to combat both air pollution and its impacts on human health.

Please provide answers to these questions and records responsive to this request by May 29, 2020. If you have any questions, please feel free to have your staff reach out to Sara Jordan (Sara.Jordan@mail.house.gov) or Radha Adhar (Radha_Adhar@duckworth.senate.gov).

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Tammy Duckworth
U.S. Senator

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Carper
U.S. Senator

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Chris Van Hollen
U.S. Senator

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

Edward J. Markey
U.S. Senator

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Richard J. Durbin
U.S. Senator

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Christopher A. Coons
U.S. Senator

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Cory A. Booker
U.S. Senator

Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

Bernard Sanders
U.S. Senator

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Elizabeth Warren
U.S. Senator

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

Jeanne Shaheen
U.S. Senator

Cindy Axne
Member of Congress

Sheldon Whitehouse
U.S. Senator

Adriano Espailat
Member of Congress

Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator

Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress

Kamala D. Harris
U.S. Senator

Scott Peters
Member of Congress

Benjamin L. Cardin
U.S. Senator

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Jeffrey A. Merkley
U.S. Senator

Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

José E. Serrano
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Harley Rouda
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Joe Neguse
Member of Congress

Sean Casten
Member of Congress

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress

Deb Haaland
Member of Congress

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress

Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Donna E. Shalala
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

Katie Porter
Member of Congress

Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Abigail D. Spanberger
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Stephen F Lynch
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Susan Wild
Member of Congress