

FRED UPTON

6TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

COMMITTEES:

ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEES:

RANKING MEMBER, TELECOMMUNICATIONS
AND THE INTERNET

ENERGY AND AIR QUALITY



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

February 4, 2008

DC OFFICE:

- 2183 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2206
(202) 225-3761
FAX: (202) 225-4986

MICHIGAN HOME OFFICES:

- 157 SOUTH KALAMAZOO MALL
SUITE 180
KALAMAZOO, MI 49007
(269) 385-0039
FAX: (269) 385-2888
- 800 CENTRE, SUITE 106
800 SHIP STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085
(269) 982-1986
FAX: (269) 982-0237

www.house.gov/upton

E-MAIL: tellupton@mail.house.gov

Mr. James Connaughton:
Chairman
Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Connaughton:

I write today to express my grave concern over the proposed ozone attainment standards slated to be mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency in the coming months. I am quite concerned that these new standards will punish Michigan's economy at a time when our state can least afford it, and would especially harm economic development. In light of the President's current economic stimulus initiative, these new standards would be a step backward.

As ranking member of the Energy and Air Quality Subcommittee, I agree that we must adhere to responsible air quality standards to preserve public health. However, we must address pollution at the source. The new standards would unfairly penalize Michigan for pollution generated in Gary, Chicago and Milwaukee. The proposed sanctions would be a severe blow to Michigan's economy, discouraging the business community from expanding or relocating in our great state.

Additionally, the necessity of stricter standards is questionable, especially since current standards have been so successful. I applaud the EPA's efforts and success in improving the nation's air quality. The national average for ozone levels decreased by 21 percent from 1980-2006, and this progress will continue as more areas across the country reach attainment of the current standards. I am optimistic about improved air quality in Michigan, and will continue to support the current standards. Most counties in Southwest Michigan have taken the necessary steps to successfully achieve attainment within the last year. Changing the rules now would negate much of the progress that has been made in many areas, including those in my district, by immediately reverting them back to non-attainment status.

Furthermore, these new standards should not be instituted until all scientific data related to the matter is fully evaluated. I have been working to ensure that our communities in southwestern Michigan are not unfairly punished for air pollution that blows across Lake Michigan from large high-pollution cities. The Energy Bill signed into law by the President in 2005 included language providing for a two-year demonstration program to examine the effect of transported ozone in our towns and cities.

The study was slated to be completed and released in the early fall of 2007, but as of right now, the results have yet to be reviewed and released. It does not make sense to force counties to comply with new, stricter ozone standards when it has yet to be determined whether ozone levels in those areas have been significantly impacted by outside sources.

It is clear that the proposed standards would result in reduced economic opportunities, higher costs to businesses and consumers, more restrictions of business practices, and a lower quality of life for all Americans. I hope you will join me in contacting EPA Administrator Johnson to express your support to maintain the current standard.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Fred Upton
Member of Congress

Any help you
can give us will
indeed be appreciated.
All the best,

