

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 17, 2015

The Honorable Gina McCarthy  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
William Jefferson Clinton Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

We write with deep concerns regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed rule published on December 17, 2015, revising National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone. Adoption of this proposal will be detrimental to Louisiana's economy.

Currently, the NAAQS for primary and secondary ground-level ozone are 75 parts per billion (ppb), with the EPA proposing to revise the standards to be set at 65 – 70 ppb. While we understand the Clean Air Act (CAA) mandates the EPA review NAAQS every five years, the law does not require a revision of the standards each time they are reviewed. Some parts of the country have not yet reached attainment with current standards, and many areas now in compliance will fall well below nonattainment status should this proposal take effect.

A study commissioned by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) warns this "regulation could be the most expensive ever issued on the American public, costing the nation \$140 billion annually" in reduced gross domestic product (GDP). The study further explains the proposal will have a substantially negative impact on Louisiana, causing a \$3 billion loss in gross state product (GSP) through 2040. Louisiana is the second largest producer of natural gas and third largest producer of petroleum in the country. Our state also provides one-fourth of America's petrochemicals, with chemical shipments totaling over \$14 billion per year. If ground-level ozone NAAQS are revised to the EPA's proposed levels, these industries will face disastrous consequences – the effects of which will be felt nationwide.

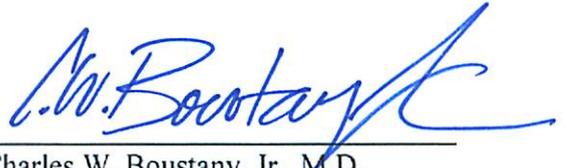
Last year, Senator Vitter, then-Representative Cassidy, and Representative Boustany convened a Field Hearing of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to hear directly from affected Louisiana businesses about this issue. In testimony, representatives of the trucking and oil and gas industries described the significant burden being placed in nonattainment status would constitute on their ability to successfully conduct businesses. Further, because some areas of the country are still noncompliant with the 75 ppb standards, your Agency does not have sufficient data to fully evaluate the benefits of retaining the current NAAQS.

Before revising the standard, the EPA should make every possible effort to work with stakeholders on developing best practices for meeting the current required standard. While we understand the EPA's responsibility to protect against environmental endangerment, it is also important that your Agency consider the economic effects its regulations will have on communities in Louisiana and across the nation.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
United States Senator



Charles W. Boustany, Jr., M.D.  
Member of Congress



John C. Fleming, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Ralph Abraham, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Garret Graves  
Member of Congress