



December 15, 2011

The Honorable Governor Beverly Perdue
Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Perdue:

We urge you to issue a statement voicing support for the Environmental Protection Agency's forthcoming rule to regulate mercury and other air toxics under the Clean Air Act. This crucial step has been delayed for more than two decades while human health and the environment have suffered. North Carolina has long been a leader in advocating for strong clean air protections and we need your support, Governor, in letting our state know that you are still a champion in this regard.

The new rule, expected to be signed on Friday, December 16, will establish the first-ever national standards for mercury emissions from coal plants, and will require that the oldest, least efficient and dirtiest plants comply with these new pollution limits. As proposed, the new mercury standards will:

- prevent 91% of mercury in coal burned at coal-fired power plants from being emitted to the air;
- save 17,000 lives each year;
- create 31,000 temporary and 9,000 permanent jobs through the development and adoption of pollution control technologies; and,
- result in net benefits of between \$42 and \$130 billion in 2016 alone, largely through its positive health impacts.

Here in North Carolina, we have around 50 coal-burning units that, according to the Toxic Release Inventory can emit nearly 3,000 pounds of mercury in a single year. Because of our overdependence on coal and the mercury pollution it leaves behind, North Carolina has freshwater fish consumption advisories from Manteo to Murphy and seventeen marine fish species are considered high-mercury contaminated fish.

We are all strongly supportive of scientifically-based limits on mercury and other air toxics as they will provide sufficient flexibility while providing enormous health, environmental and economic benefits. We urge you to issue a statement expressing your support, as well.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Dr. Stephen A. Smith, Executive Director
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

Julie V. Mayfield, Executive Director,
Western North Carolina Alliance

June Blotnick, Executive Director
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Richard Fireman, Public Policy Advisor
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Tim Gestwicki, Executive Director
NC Wildlife Federation

Elizabeth Outzs, State Director
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Dennis Alexander, Regional Executive Director
American Lung Association in North Carolina

Brian Buzby, Executive Director
NC Conservation Network

CC:

U.S. Senator Richard Burr

U.S. Senator Kay Hagan

North Carolina Congressional Delegation

Enclosure: Mercury & Air Toxics support letter from Female Members of Congress