

April 17, 2019

Administrator Andrew Wheeler  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

As faith leaders from a broad spectrum of religious traditions, we write to urge you to not weaken the Environmental Protection Agency's Mercury and Air Toxic Standards. Faith traditions teach us the importance not only of protecting God's creation from environmental hazards like mercury pollution, but also urge us to care for vulnerable populations.

Mercury pollution disproportionately impacts people of color and lower income families and has devastating impacts on children and pregnant women including damage to developing lungs, kidneys, heart and brain. Because of mercury pollution's impact to human health and especially vulnerable populations, we are compelled to speak out against any weakening of the mercury pollution standards.

The current standards have been instrumental in reducing dangerous mercury and other toxic air pollutants released from coal and oil burning power plants. As projected by your own agency, the mercury standards avoid up to 11,000 premature deaths, 5,000 heart attacks and 130,000 asthma attacks each year.

Mercury pollution standards should not discount human health or limit co-benefits in the cost-benefit analysis. We support the 2003 guidelines issued by the George W. Bush Administration that work to protect human health. The standards should put the wellbeing of vulnerable communities and all of God's creation at the forefront.

We believe that weakening the mercury standards does not fulfill EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment and will not protect the common good. The current Mercury and Air Toxic Standards help us care for God's creation and should not be weakened.

Sincerely,

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