

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
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**Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman**  
**Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**“The American Energy Initiative: Recent EPA Rulemakings Relating to Boilers, Cement**  
**Manufacturing Plants, and Utilities”**  
**Subcommittee on Energy and Power**  
**April 15, 2011**

Mr. Chairman, today’s hearing is one more in a series of assaults on the Clean Air Act.

Chairman Whitfield announced yesterday that after the recess, we will consider legislation to delay implementation of the rules to reduce toxic air pollution from utilities, boilers, and cement plants. That would be a major setback for clean air. If we delay these requirements to clean up toxic air pollution, our children, and many other Americans, will suffer serious and in many cases irreversible harm.

Toxic air pollution from power plants, industrial boilers, and cement plants includes mercury and lead, which harm brain development in babies and children; arsenic, chromium, and nickel, which cause cancer; and acid gases, which damage the lungs and contribute to asthma, bronchitis, and other chronic respiratory disease, especially in children and seniors. These facilities also emit particulate matter, which causes heart attacks, strokes, asthma attacks, hospital admissions, and premature death.

And these are big sources of pollution. Power plants are the largest source of mercury air pollution in the country. Boilers are the second largest source of mercury air pollution in the country. And, guess what? Cement plants are the third largest source of mercury air pollution in the country.

A few weeks ago when this Committee reported legislation to repeal EPA’s authority to reduce carbon pollution, my Republican colleagues argued that they weren’t trying to weaken the Clean Air Act; they weren’t trying to block regulations to stop toxic emissions; and they really do support clean air.

The Chairman of the full Committee said – and I quote – “EPA’s ability and obligation to regulate and mitigate air pollutants like particulates that cause soot, ozone that cause smog,

carbon monoxide, lead, asbestos, chloroform and almost 200 other air pollutants would be protected and preserved.”

That was last month. This month they are directly targeting EPA’s ability to protect the public from those very pollutants.

And let’s be clear. Delaying these rules will hurt a large number of people, especially children. Cleaning up cement plants will avoid 17,000 cases of aggravated asthma and 1,500 heart attacks, each year. Cleaning up boilers will avoid between 2,600 and 6,600 premature deaths, 4,100 heart attacks, and 4,400 hospital and emergency room visits each year. And cleaning up power plants will avoid somewhere between 7,000 and 17,000 premature deaths, 11,000 heart attacks, and 120,000 cases of aggravated asthma each year.

For every year these rules are delayed, thousands of Americans will die prematurely. Each year, there will be over 150,000 cases of aggravated asthma, many of them children. There will be 1.3 million additional lost work days.

It’s now been forty years since we adopted the Clean Air Act. And the three industries that are the largest sources of toxic air pollution in the country still don’t have to use readily available technology to clean it up. American families have waited long enough.

I’ve worked for clean air my entire career. I’ve heard complaints about the costs of regulations more times than I can count. And every time, once we set the standards, industry applies American ingenuity and technical know-how and gets the job done, almost always below the projected costs. I have every confidence that they will do it again here.

But that won’t happen if Congress repeals or blocks the Clean Air Act and stops EPA from doing its job.