

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 23, 2025

The Honorable Lee M. Zeldin  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

As Members of Congress, we urge the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to immediately retract its proposal, announced on June 11, 2025, to weaken Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS)<sup>1</sup>. Should the agency refuse to retract the rule, EPA should provide 75 days for comment and hold multiple public hearings. 55 days for public comment and one public hearing is simply insufficient for EPA to understand the gravity of the impact this regulatory abandonment will have on communities.

It is the mission of EPA to protect human health and the environment. To achieve these goals, Congress gave EPA authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate hazardous air pollutants, like mercury and arsenic from power plants. Rolling back the MATS rule is a cruel abandonment of the agency's statutory obligations that will endanger children's health, harm communities, and let the worst industrial polluters off the hook.

Coal-fired power plants emit mercury<sup>2</sup> and other toxic pollutants, poisoning the air and water, and particularly impacting those living on the fenceline and downwind of these facilities. Mercury pollution harms infants and children by causing permanent brain damage with long-term harms such as development delays, learning disabilities, and birth defects<sup>3</sup>. Due to environmental injustice, communities of color and low-income communities are more likely to live near coal-fired power plants and be exposed to this dangerous pollution<sup>4</sup>. As mercury pollution settles into waterways and streams, communities that rely on fish from those local waterways as a dietary staple, including Indigenous communities, would also experience higher levels of mercury exposure from these facilities should this rule be rolled back.

Standards limiting mercury and air toxics pollution have been successful in reducing mercury pollution from power plants by 90%, as well as having additional benefits of decreasing other dangerous air pollutants<sup>5</sup>. The 2024 MATS rule was projected to achieve \$300 million in health benefits over a decade<sup>6</sup>—benefits that would be stripped away with the proposed rollback.

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<sup>1</sup> [epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-proposes-repeal-biden-harris-epa-regulations-power-plants-which-if-finalized-would](https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-proposes-repeal-biden-harris-epa-regulations-power-plants-which-if-finalized-would)

<sup>2</sup> [epa.gov/mercury/basic-information-about-mercury](https://www.epa.gov/mercury/basic-information-about-mercury)

<sup>3</sup> [epa.gov/mercury/health-effects-exposures-mercury](https://www.epa.gov/mercury/health-effects-exposures-mercury)

<sup>4</sup> [ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305558](https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305558)

<sup>5</sup> [epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-proposes-strengthen-mercury-and-air-toxics-standards-power](https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-proposes-strengthen-mercury-and-air-toxics-standards-power)

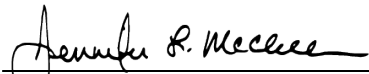
<sup>6</sup> [epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-proposes-strengthen-mercury-and-air-toxics-standards-power](https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-proposes-strengthen-mercury-and-air-toxics-standards-power)

The goal of EPA should be to reduce hazardous air pollution, like mercury emissions, by the maximum extent possible. The standards set by the 2024 rule for mercury and air toxics pollution are not only achievable<sup>7</sup>, but the majority of power plants were either already meeting them or only required small changes to comply. Weakening these commonsense standards would allow for the worst of the worst industrial polluters to ratchet up their hazardous emissions. The Trump Administration is already giving out free passes for power plants to pollute<sup>8</sup> and concealing the process for granting exemptions from the public, allowing some of the biggest corporate polluters to increase toxic air pollution into nearby communities without accountability.

The rollback of the MATS rule is part of the Trump Administration's deregulatory, Polluters First Agenda attacking dozens of climate and health protections with deadly and costly consequences. An Associated Press study estimates that eliminating more than 30 EPA protections that protect our air, water, and climate would cost \$275 billion dollars and more than 30,000 lives lost each year. Weakening the MATS rule, along with eliminating safeguards protecting communities from soot and smog pollution, would increase coal-related deaths by 10,000 each year<sup>9</sup>.

By rolling back the MATS rule, the Trump Administration is choosing corporate polluters over the health and lives of everyday Americans across the country. We implore you to keep our communities and the environment safe from health-harming pollution by stopping this reckless rollback, extending the comment period to 75 days to allow for meaningful public engagement, and committing to holding multiple public hearings to allow affected fenceline communities ample opportunities to be heard in this process.

Sincerely,




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Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress




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Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress




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Kevin Mullin  
Member of Congress




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Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress

<sup>7</sup> [epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-04/fact-sheet\\_mats-rtr-final\\_rule\\_2024.pdf](https://epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-04/fact-sheet_mats-rtr-final_rule_2024.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [edf.org/maps/epa-pollution-pass](https://edf.org/maps/epa-pollution-pass)

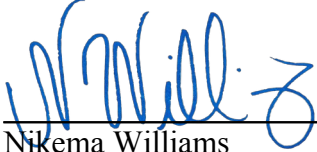
<sup>9</sup> [apnews.com/article/epa-rollbacks-trump-zeldin-pollution-rules-emissions-49a396a37a2080ad3f93e20adbcbclfd](https://apnews.com/article/epa-rollbacks-trump-zeldin-pollution-rules-emissions-49a396a37a2080ad3f93e20adbcbclfd)



Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



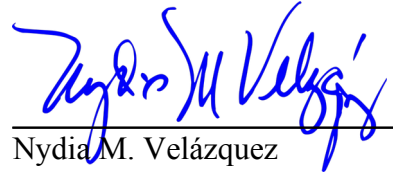
Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



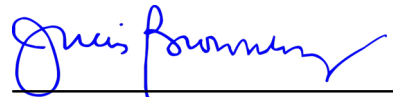
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



Laura Friedman  
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen  
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Mike Quigley  
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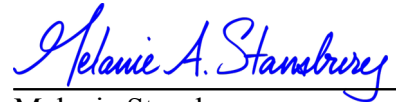
Emilia Strong Sykes  
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



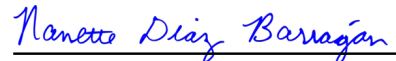
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.  
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán  
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Cleo Fields  
Member of Congress



Lateefah Simon  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



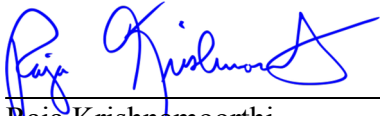
Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



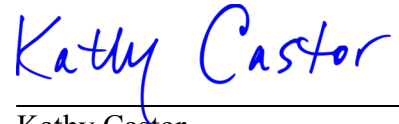
Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress




Nellie Pou  
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



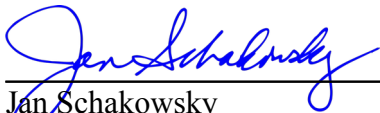
Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress



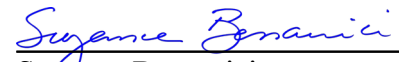
Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



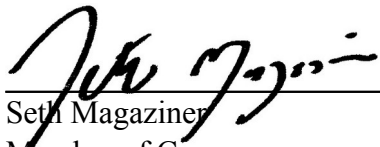
Maxine Dexter  
Member of Congress



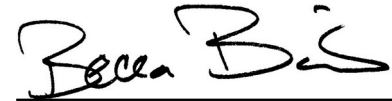
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee  
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



Janelle S. Bynum  
Member of Congress



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Jim Tokuda  
Member of Congress



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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



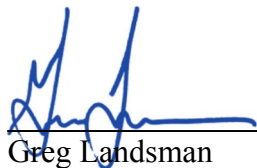
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Kelly Morrison  
Member of Congress



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Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



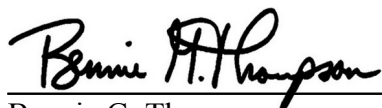
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Greg Landsman  
Member of Congress



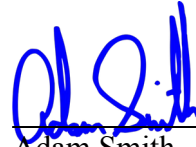
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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



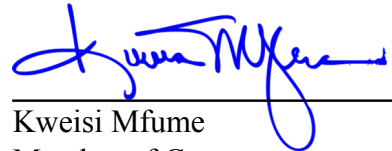
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Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



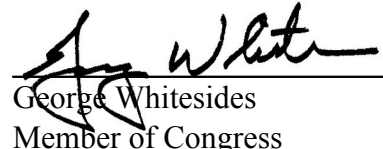
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Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



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Kweisi Mfume  
Member of Congress



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George Whitesides  
Member of Congress



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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



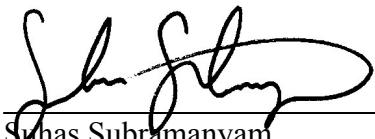
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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

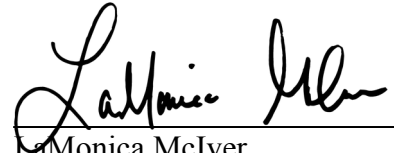


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Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam  
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



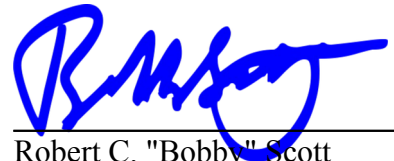
Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



Mark Takano  
Member of Congress



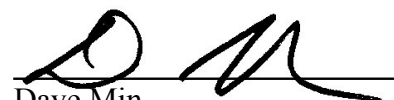
Robert J. Menendez  
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Dave Min  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Valerie P. Foushee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "V" and "F".

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Valerie P. Foushee  
Member of Congress