



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 23 2009

OFFICE OF  
AIR AND RADIATION

Colleen Cripps, NACAA Co-President  
Arturo J. Blanco, NACAA Co-President  
National Association of Clean Air Agencies  
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 307  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Colleen and Arturo:

Thank you for your letters highlighting some of the key issues that EPA and states face in implementing the Clean Air Act. I understand the critical need for additional resources to help effectively implement the Act. The recent decreases in state funding are coming at a time of increasing demands on both EPA and state programs. EPA is committed to doing all that is possible, both in terms of attempting to obtain additional funding and identifying the most efficient ways to carry out EPA and state responsibilities.

EPA's accelerated schedule for completing reviews of National Ambient Air Quality Standards in order to meet the five-year deadline in the Clean Air Act is a major factor in the increasing demands on our programs. I am sure that you will agree, however, that the standards are among our most powerful science-based tools for protecting the health of the nation's most vulnerable citizens, including children and the elderly.

Monitoring is essential for determining the quality of the air Americans breathe, as well as for measuring the success of our programs. I want to work with state and local agencies to establish and upgrade monitoring programs in ways that are both sensible and defensible, in terms of scientific credibility. EPA is willing to explore how the different grant authorities in the Clean Air Act can be used in meeting new monitoring requirements.

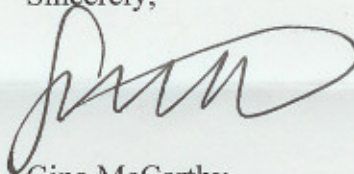
You and others have stressed the importance of the role that Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs) have played in air management programs. EPA supports regional planning and cooperation in addressing air quality issues throughout the nation. RPOs and other regional organizations have played useful roles in providing states, tribes, and local agencies with the information and other support needed to develop and carry out their programs. In response to the concerns that you and others have voiced, the Agency is willing to reassess the future role of regional organizations in helping to carry out the national air program.

Finally, EPA understands the concerns that you and others have about the potentially severe disruptions in state and local programs from implementing a revised allocation method for

section 105 grants. We also understand the concerns of the state and local agencies that believe that the existing method has not kept pace with changes in the factors that contribute to poor air quality. EPA does not intend to move forward on the revised method in a way that would cause disruptions, particularly in these difficult financial times. The Agency does, however, urge that you work with us to find a way to ensure equitable funding in the future.

Again, thank you for your letter. I appreciate the opportunity to be of service and trust the information provided is helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gina McCarthy', written in a cursive style.

Gina McCarthy  
Assistant Administrator