



# Pennsylvania Society for Respiratory Care, Inc.

The Honorable Robert P. Casey Jr.  
United States Senate  
22 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 6A  
Washington, D.C. 17101

March 9, 2011

Dear Senator Casey,

As a healthcare organization, we are committed to ensuring that the health of all Americans remains paramount. Towards this end, we strongly urge you to support the Environmental Protection Agency's new clean air standards.

For decades, unregulated coal plants have released toxic chemicals into the air we breathe. Although the Clean Air Act amendments of 1977 required fossil fuel facilities to install modern emission controls, many plants continue to operate without proper equipment that minimizes air pollution. As a result, harmful chemical emissions such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides become transformed into fine air particles. These pollutants cause serious health problems for individuals inhabiting the surrounding area.

According to the American Lung Association, prolonged exposure to particle pollution has been linked to considerable damage to small airways of the lungs, severe asthma attacks in children, inflammation of lung tissue in young, healthy adults, increased instances of heart attacks for the elderly and those with heart conditions, and even death from respiratory or cardiovascular causes. In fact, scientists working for the California Environmental Protection Agency Air Resources Board found that nearly 18,000 deaths occur annually in California from fine particle pollution.

To combat this threat to public health, the EPA has devised a set of important rules and regulations to reduce air pollution. The EPA's clean air standards utilize the most recent scientific data and technologies to prevent toxic emissions from entering our atmosphere. Of these rulemakings, the two most significant include a proposed Clean Air Transport Rule (CATR), that would reduce NO<sub>x</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub> power plant emissions in the eastern United States, and a court-ordered hazardous air pollutants (HAP) rule that aims to reduce acid gases and toxic heavy metal emissions, including mercury.

Thus, enforcing the Environmental Protection Agency's new air standards would benefit the health and well-being of all Americans. We must act now to provide our citizens with the protection from air pollution that they need and deserve.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this important issue.

Steve Mosakowski MBA, RRT-NPS, CPFT  
2011 PSRC President  
Email: [2011President@PSRC.net](mailto:2011President@PSRC.net)  
Phone: 610-431-5691