How the Clean Air Act Impacts Building Necessary Infrastructure/Onshoring American Innovation: Subcommittee on Environment/U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee Hearing



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The Subcommittee on Environment of the United States House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee held a hearing on June 11, titled:

Short-Circuiting Progress: How the Clean Air Act Impacts Building Necessary Infrastructure and Onshoring American Innovation ("Hearing").

The Energy and Commerce Chairman and Subcommittee on Environment Chairman describe the Hearing as offering:

…a chance to examine ways that Congress can take steps to make environmental statutes more workable, increase domestic manufacturing, and support American jobs.

The Hearing addressed:

- Clean Air Act.
- Particulate Matter standards.
- Improving air quality trends.

Issues for discussion included:

- The process and timelines for reviewing and revising NAAQS.
- The timeliness of EPA's review of SIPS and the use of FIPS.
- The impact that forest fires and exceptional events can have on attaining NAAQS.
- How non-attainment designations can impact infrastructure development and economic growth.
- Air quality trends in recent decades.

The Hearing discussed two legislative discussion drafts relating to, what they describe as, reforming the Clean Air Act National Ambient Air Quality Standards ("NAAQS") program, which include:

1. H.R. ____, CLEAN AIR AND ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT REFORM ACT (CLEAR ACT).

1. Making several changes to the process for r establishing and implementing NAAQS, including extending the current NAAQS review cycle from five years to ten years, allowing consideration of attainability, providing states the opportunity to address concerns in a State Implentation Plan submission before a Federal Implementation Plan is issued, and eliminating certain demonstration requirements in a State Implentation Plan to promote increased technological innovations in control technologies.

2. H.R. ____, CLEAN AIR AND BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT ACT.

    1. Requiring the Environmental Protection Agency Administrator to concurrently publish regulations and guidance for implementing a revised NAAQS and prevent the new or revised standards from applying to preconstruction permit applications until the Administrator has published such final regulations and guidance, and other requirements.

The witnesses included:

- Dr. James W. Boylan, Chief of the Air Protection Branch at the Georgia Environmental Protection Division
- Chad S. Whiteman, Vice President, Environment and Regulatory Affairs, Global Energy Institute, U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Paul Noe, Vice President, Public Policy, American Forest & Paper Association
- John Walke, Director, Federal Clean Air & Senior Attorney, Natural Resources Defense Council.

A link to the Hearing information including the Hearing Announcement and Hearing Memo can be found here.