



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

August 18, 2023

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Elizabeth A. Sheppard, Ph.D.  
Chair, Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
William Jefferson Clinton Federal Building  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Sheppard:

I would like to thank you and the other members of the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee for your June 9, 2023, letter conveying your comments on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's *Policy Assessment for the Reconsideration of the Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards, External Review Draft Version 2*. I greatly appreciate the review and advice provided by CASAC as well as the extensive work by the Ozone Review Panel to help inform that review during the March 29 and 30 and May 23 and 24, 2023, public meetings.

When I announced October 28, 2021, that the EPA would reconsider the 2020 ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards decision, I did so to reaffirm the agency's commitment to a robust NAAQS review process that upholds the EPA's mission to protect public health, adheres to rigorous standards of scientific integrity and provides ample opportunities for public input and engagement.

An important part of the robust review process is ensuring CASAC is fully equipped to provide the EPA with the benefit of its expert advice. To support that goal, I reinstalled an Ozone Review Panel to provide targeted expertise and advice to support CASAC's review, as requested by CASAC itself. CASAC's thorough review of the draft policy assessment, as expressed in CASAC's June 9, 2023, letter, has provided the EPA with valuable information about the latest ozone science and recommendations for analyses that would be important in informing consideration of the ozone NAAQS.

I have carefully reviewed and considered the comments CASAC provided in the recent letter. In particular, I have taken note of the CASAC advice that the draft policy assessment is missing important analyses and information and that the draft policy assessment "... does not provide sufficient information to adequately consider alternative form and level combinations." CASAC also advised "...that the EPA incorporate the information available from the epidemiological studies in the risk assessment." I have also noted CASAC's identification of several new studies that were published recently and were not included in the 2020 Integrated Science Assessment and CASAC's reliance on this new literature in recommending revisions to the standards.

In light of CASAC's significant comments on the draft policy assessment and its advice on the importance of new studies not evaluated in the 2020 Integrated Science Assessment, it is clear that CASAC's careful review has identified several issues arising in the reconsideration that warrant

additional evaluation and review, both by the EPA and by CASAC, including newly available information that has not yet been integrated into the air quality criteria and the value of developing additional analyses to inform further evaluation of the current standards.

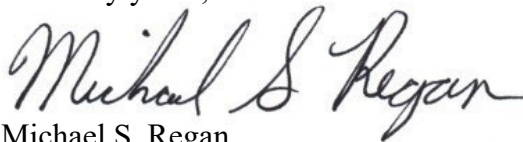
I remain committed to upholding the integrity and rigor of the NAAQS review process and to addressing the issues that CASAC has raised. Given the scope of those issues and the EPA's obligation under the Clean Air Act to conduct periodic five-year reviews of the air quality criteria and the standards, I have decided that the best path forward is to initiate a new statutory review of the ozone NAAQS and the underlying air quality criteria and to wrap the EPA's reconsideration process of the 2020 ozone NAAQS decision into that review. This approach would facilitate additional work to address CASAC's advice, as well as consideration of newer studies and updated analyses, in the context of a full and systematic review of the air quality criteria and standards, with the opportunities for CASAC advice and public engagement that such a process involves.

I have instructed my staff to immediately announce a new review of the ozone NAAQS, as well as the underlying air-quality criteria, and to complete this review as expeditiously as possible, while also upholding the scientific integrity and rigor of the NAAQS review process and providing opportunities for public input and engagement.

If you have any questions, Tom Brennan stands ready to assist and is available at (202) 564-6953 and [brennan.thomas@epa.gov](mailto:brennan.thomas@epa.gov).

In the meantime, please accept my gratitude for the thoughtful advice CASAC has provided in this reconsideration of the 2020 ozone NAAQS decision. I also wish to thank the Ozone Review Panel members for providing the benefit of their expertise to CASAC throughout the reconsideration process. Your advice and recommendations will play an important role in the scoping and planning stage of the new review. You have my deep appreciation for your service to the EPA and the nation.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Regan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael S. Regan