

# Congress of the United States House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

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December 3, 2013

James R. Mihelcic, Ph.D.  
Chair  
SAB Work Group on EPA Planned Actions  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Chairman Mihelcic and Members of the Work Group,

Thank you for your diligent efforts in reviewing the science underpinning major Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rulemakings. Your recent evaluation of major actions highlighted significant weaknesses in the science supporting EPA's New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for power plants. Contrary to the Agency's original claims, the Work Group's fact-finding efforts reveal that peer review of these studies appears inadequate. This is what your Work Group is designed to safe-guard against. So thank you for your vigilant oversight.

We all value protecting the environment but it must be done in a way that makes sense for our country. We've made great strides in cleaning up our nation's air and water, but as we seek to build on this progress, future requirements should be based on a realistic evaluation of what technology can deliver. Because this rule affects the price and reliability of electricity for hundreds of millions of Americans, we can't afford to gamble with half-baked models and empty promises.

Your discoveries raise serious questions about EPA's proposed NSPS rule. As you noted, "this action involves precedential and novel issues that rely on new technologies and science for carbon capture and storage (CCS)." Absent the honest scientific evaluation you request, it would be irresponsible for EPA to rush ahead with a rule requiring these experimental technologies. The time and expertise of SAB members is too valuable to waste on reviews that EPA never intends to heed.

Thank you again for raising these important concerns.

Sincerely,



Rep. Lamar Smith

Chairman

Committee on Science, Space, and  
Technology