



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

MAR 20 2009

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. Deborah L. Swackhamer
Chair, Science Advisory Board
Dr. David T. Allen
Chair, SAB Particulate Matter Research
Centers Program Advisory Panel
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Drs. Swackhamer and Allen:

Thank you for sending me the *Particulate Matter Research Centers Program Advisory Report*. It provides very helpful guidance as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency continues moving forward with its Clean Air Research Program.

I appreciate the Panel's recognition that the Particulate Matter Research Centers program has been very successful and that its continuation would be of great value. Your letter underscored that the Centers have made critical advances in improving scientific understanding of many aspects of PM and its health impacts. In addition, the Panel noted that the Centers' research has been extensively cited in documents supporting policy decisions and has been influential in the scientific community. These conclusions provide EPA with great support as we move forward with another competitive solicitation for multidisciplinary air pollution research centers.

As EPA staff members have now begun the process of drafting the grant competition announcement, the guidance provided in the Panel's report is already helping to shape the future direction of the Centers program. The insights and advice from the Panel are extremely valuable as EPA seeks to identify the highest-priority science questions, balancing the need for enhancing multi-pollutant air research with the need to continue to address single pollutant research gaps. The Panel's advice on how to encourage research on regional differences in exposure and health effects is currently under consideration, as is the analysis of how the Centers might be structured in the future. I particularly appreciate the panel's advice on additional quantifiable measures EPA might adopt to demonstrate the impacts of not only the PM Centers, but many of its research programs.

Please extend my thanks to all members of the PM Research Centers Advisory Panel who provided us with such a thoughtful and timely report. I look forward to working with the Science Advisory Board as we work together to enhance science at EPA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa P. Jackson", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

Lisa P. Jackson