



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

JUL 25 2008

THE ADMINISTRATOR

EPA-CASAC-08-015

Dr. Rogene Henderson
Chair
Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee
Science Advisory Board
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Subject: Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee's Peer Review of EPA's Integrated Science Assessment for Oxides of Nitrogen – Health Criteria (Second External Review Draft, May 2008)

Dear Dr. Henderson:

Thank you very much for your letter of June 25, 2008, regarding the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee Oxides of Nitrogen Primary National Ambient Air Quality Standards Review Panel's review of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's *Second External Review Draft of the Integrated Science Assessment for Oxides of Nitrogen - Health Criteria* (draft ISA for NO_x) on May 1 and 2, 2008. As you know, the final *Integrated Science Assessment for Oxides of Nitrogen - Health Criteria* was released by the Agency on July 11, 2008. EPA greatly appreciates the CASAC Panel's time and careful review of the complex science issues included in the Agency's draft ISA for NO_x.

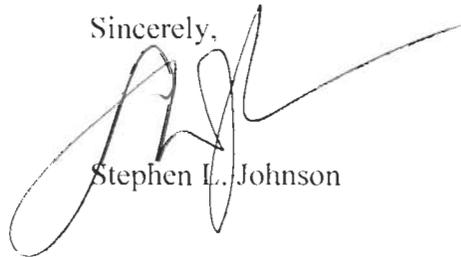
Your letter included a summary of CASAC's major comments and recommendations, as well as extensive comments from CASAC Panel members. The advice and discussion of issues contained in the CASAC Panel's report have been very helpful to EPA scientists who have been carefully considering this information as they complete the ISA for NO_x. This is the first ISA produced under EPA's revised process for review of the national ambient air quality standards, and your comments and suggestions will help us as we further develop and sharpen our approach to developing ISAs. I have been assured by my staff that they gave full consideration to both the CASAC's comments and recommendations and the public comments received by the Agency as the document was revised.

Your report raised a number of key points on which EPA focused while revising the 2nd draft ISA. The final ISA includes a more comprehensive summary of the evidence and draws conclusions about the extent to which associations between NO₂ and health responses in epidemiology studies result from exposures to NO₂ per se or from NO₂ as potential marker for

other pollutants associated with common-cause sources. Following on that, an enhanced discussion of the significance of the epidemiology data, including consideration of the effect of co-exposures to other pollutants and associated uncertainties informing a potential risk assessment, is also provided. The final ISA includes an expanded discussion of subpopulations likely to be more susceptible or vulnerable to adverse effects of exposure to NO₂. We also have added figures and discussion to convey more fully the coverage and utility of the regulatory ambient NO₂ monitoring network and the human populations surrounding the monitors. Also, consistent with your advice, the ISA better integrates data on levels of exposure in relation to current ambient concentrations for the studies presented, thus providing information about the occurrence of effects at ambient levels.

In closing, I reiterate my appreciation to you and the CASAC Panel members for your review of the draft ISA. Your advice and detailed comments have been very valuable in helping EPA prepare this first ISA under the new NAAQS process. Your contributions will continue to help ensure that the best science is used to inform the regulatory process.

Sincerely,



Stephen L. Johnson

cc: Angela Nugent
CASAC NO_x Primary Review Panel

*Angela -
Thank you for
your leadership!*

