VIRGINIA.
CHAMBER

THE VOICE of BUSINESS

February 13, 2015

The Honorable Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor McAuliffe,

Making Virginia the best possible state in which to live, work and do business is the primary goal of the state and regional chambers of commerce. One of the valuable roles we play is identifying problematic rules and regulations that can inhibit economic development and job growth.

We are writing to express our collective alarm at a recent proposed rule by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to lower the current federal ozone standards. Ozone standards have been in place for many years and Virginia has made consistent improvement in this area for many years. The current standard of 75 ppb (parts per billion) has been in place for several years. The EPA is currently taking comments on changing the standard to as low as 65 ppb. *This issue is separate from the EPA 111 (d) standards impacting carbon emissions, but could have a more costly impact on Virginia businesses in the long run.*

Changing the ozone standard to 65 ppb would have a disastrous impact on Virginia in terms of job creation and economic development. This would essentially put the entire municipal areas in Northern Virginia, Central Virginia and Hampton Roads in non-attainment status. This would require State Implementation Plans (SIPs) that would almost necessarily include restrictions on a variety of manufacturing, power generation, industrial development and other economically beneficial activities.

The EPA maintains that this regulatory overreach is justified by public health needs. However, the science does not support that stance. Respiratory difficulties such as asthma are most commonly associated with ozone. Yet the EPA's own data shows that national ozone concentration levels have steadily decreased since 1980, even as domestic cases of asthma have risen. The science is simply not there to justify these onerous standards.

We are specifically asking you to write a letter to EPA Director Gina McCarthy stating your concerns with the proposed changes to the ozone rules. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce
Altavista Chamber of Commerce

Buchanan County Chamber of Commerce
Clarksville Lake Country Chamber of Commerce
Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce
Dickenson County Chamber of Commerce
Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce
Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce
Greater Bluefield Chamber of Commerce
Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce
Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce
Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce
Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
Lunenburg County Chamber of Commerce
Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce
Northumberland County Chamber of Commerce
Petersburg Chamber of Commerce
Prince William Chamber of Commerce
Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce
Twin County Regional Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce