

BLAINE LUETKEMEYERMEMBER OF CONGRESS
3RD DISTRICT, MISSOURICOMMITTEE ON
SMALL BUSINESS
VICE CHAIRMANHEALTH AND TECHNOLOGY
AGRICULTURE, ENERGY AND TRADECOMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICESHOUSING AND INSURANCE
VICE CHAIRMANFINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
AND CONSUMER CREDIT**Congress of the United States**
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

I am writing to express my concerns with the New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for residential wood burning heating systems proposed by the EPA on January 3, 2014. The new regulations will have severe impacts on many of my constituents, particularly those residing in rural areas and who use wood burning heaters to heat their homes. The increased costs stemming from these regulations will make wood burning heaters unaffordable to many consumers and will drive small manufacturers out of business. I urge the agency to reconsider the NSPS regulatory amendments to take into account the disproportionate impact on rural Americans and small businesses.

As you may know, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 2.4 million households, 12 percent of all homes, burn wood as their primary heating fuel. In my district and in many other areas throughout the country, wood burning heaters have been a mainstay of households for hundreds of years. Many of these consumers have limited access to other heating fuels and turn to wood as a readily available, affordable, and renewable source of fuel.

It is estimated that the new regulations would prohibit the production and sale of 80 percent of America's current wood burning heating systems. Although the regulation does not apply to currently installed heaters, it will significantly increase the purchase price of new heaters, deterring upgrades and replacements, which are more environmentally-friendly, and discouraging adoption of wood burning heaters in new homes. Limiting consumer choice by drastically increasing costs will have a disparate effect on rural and low-income households that rely on this economically-feasible heating solution.

Additionally, many manufacturers of wood burning heaters are small, local businesses. The hastened implementation schedule, coupled with the prohibition of sales of existing inventory after implementation, will force many manufacturers out of business. At a time of record unemployment, small businesses provide an engine of economic growth and job creation. When promulgating these and other regulations, I urge the agency to work with small businesses and job creators rather than working against them.

While the goal of improving air quality is laudable, the substantial costs of these regulations threaten to outweigh any potential benefits. I urge the agency to reevaluate the timing, methodology, and overall restrictions of the regulations by taking into account the disproportionate impact they will have on rural and low-income consumers and small businesses. The agency should consider altering the one-size-fits-

all manner that requires the rules to apply equally to heavily air-polluted urban areas and relatively less-polluted rural areas. Our nation has a diverse abundance of resources as well as challenges, and deserves a regulatory system that recognizes these challenges and maximizes the use of different resources.

Due to the short time from proposal to implementation, I request that you address these concerns in a timely manner. I thank you for your consideration and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Blaine Luetkemeyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Blaine Luetkemeyer
Member of Congress