



Asthma and Allergy  
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MICHIGAN CHAPTER

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# Michigan health groups urge EPA to set stronger air quality standards to protect public health

## *EPA proposal maintains weak, harmful standards*

LANSING – Michigan health groups provided testimony this week during a public hearing urging the **Environmental Protection Agency** to set stronger **National Ambient Air Quality Standards** (NAAQS) for ozone pollution to protect public health.

The current NAAQS standard is 70 ppb, and these groups are pushing for a stricter standard of 60 ppb. According to a study from the **American Thoracic Society**, a lower standard of 60 ppb would result in 132 lives saved, 304 instances of serious illness avoided and 313,447 missed school and workdays eliminated in Michigan alone.

“The National Ambient Air Quality Standards is vital for public health,” said **Kathleen Slonager**, RN, AE-C, CCH and executive director for the **Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America - Michigan Chapter**. “Freezing these weak and harmful standards will be detrimental to everyone in this country, especially those who suffer from respiratory diseases like asthma and COPD. This is especially true for communities of color. To make matters worse, the EPA has limited the time professionals and the public can provide input from the standard 60 days to 48 days. This proposal will have a direct, negative impact on people across the country and it’s absolutely vital we have adequate time to voice our concerns. It is high time the Environmental Protection Agency live up to its name and mission and protect our people and planet.”

“Nearly half of Michigan residents live in areas with unacceptable levels of smog,” said **Kindra Weid**, registered nurse and coalition coordinator for **MI Air MI Health**. “Dangerous air pollution disproportionately impacts Black Americans, Indigenous people and people of color — leading to increased risks of harm, including premature death, from exposure to air pollution. The EPA’s proposal to keep the current, inadequate standard is simply unacceptable. I am calling on the EPA to move past our current harmful standards and set stronger National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone pollution to protect public health and the environment.”

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