



ORGANIZING *for* HEALTH *and* JUSTICE

Senator Gillibrand  
726 Exchange St. #511  
Buffalo, NY 14210

January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017

Dear Senator Gillibrand,

On behalf of Clean Air thank you for your words to Scott Pruitt last Wednesday, "I need you to care about human health and really believe that the cost — when human health is at risk, when people are dying — is far higher than ... the cost to that polluter to clean up the air. I need you to feel it, as if your children sitting behind you are the ones in the emergency room."

As you know, Clean Air has been running and winning campaigns for health and equity in Western New York for over 10 years. Our members who live in Tonawanda have organized to reduce toxic emissions from companies like Tonawanda Coke, DuPont, Noco, and are fighting to transition the decommissioned Huntley Coal site in a way that grows the economy and improves public health. On Buffalo's East side we have been organizing to clean up a legacy waste site that has been leaking PCB's, which are known to cause cancer and other health problems. We have instigated a state enforcement action against a concrete crushing company brought up on numerous air and solid waste violations — and whose actions are destroying a neighborhood's quality of life in the Seneca Babcock area.

Today, data shows that the levels of pollutants in Erie County are the lowest on record in the last seven years. In Tonawanda alone, benzene - a known carcinogen - has been reduced by 92%. The public health gains that we have made are now at risk of being dismantled.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s clear role is to protect human health and the environment. The nomination of Scott Pruitt as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency poses a direct threat to the health and quality of life of our members. Pruitt's nomination signals the elimination of critical environmental, climate, and public health regulations. If confirmed, we expect policies protecting environmental justice communities, like ours in Western New York, and enforcement of those laws, to be targeted, weakened, or altogether eliminated.

You have shown leadership and courage and voted 'no' on the appointments of Ben Carson and General James Mattis- thank you. We are asking that you continue to protect the quality of life of Western new Yorkers and vote 'no' on Mr. Pruitt's appointment to lead the EPA.

Sincerely,

The Staff and Membership of Clean Air

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