



Maine Healthy Air Coalition

THE MAINE HEALTHY AIR COALITION and THE CLEAN AIR ACT

The Maine Healthy Air Coalition is a group of 26 statewide and local health care and public health organizations. We are concerned about Maine's air quality and the recent attacks on the Clean Air Act in Congress. We are committed to defending and protecting the Clean Air Act – a cornerstone law that has been working effectively to make our air healthier for over 40 years.

The Clean Air Act is part of Maine's heritage and the key to our future. It is also the best tool we have to protect all Americans from dangerous air pollution. The Clean Air Act protects public health by reducing levels of smog, soot, and other air toxins and it gives the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the power to clean up the air.

We need the Clean Air Act because air pollution doesn't respect state borders. Pollution comes into Maine from other states, especially those with coal-fired power plants. The Clean Air Act and national air quality standards help protect our families from air pollution imported from other states.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY AIR

The two most widespread air pollutants, ozone and particle pollution, can lead to serious health effects. Ozone, also known as smog, is created in the atmosphere by gasses that come out of tailpipes and smokestacks and mix with warm air and sunshine. Particle pollution is a mixture of very tiny solid and liquid particles in the air, which come directly from tailpipes, smokestacks and wood fires.

Half of the people in Maine live in counties with unhealthy air, according to the American Lung Association's 2011 *State of the Air Report*. Unhealthy air leads to dangerous health effects for all of us, but the most vulnerable are children, the elderly, and people with chronic diseases like asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes.

Maine families and businesses need healthy air to grow and succeed. Our health, our economic opportunities, and our quality of life all depend on clean and healthy air. When people are healthy, children do better in school, workers are more productive, and businesses can add jobs because their health costs are lower. We need a strong Clean Air Act now more than ever.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP DEFEND THE CLEAN AIR ACT

Call or write your members of Congress. Tell them to defend the Clean Air Act against all attempts to weaken or dismantle it and strengthen EPA standards to more adequately reflect the best science and protect public health.

- **Call Senator Susan Collins: (207) 780-3575**
- **Call Senator Olympia Snowe: (207) 874-0883**

Share your story. If you have asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease or another health condition that puts you at particular risk from the dangers of air pollution, please share your story by contacting us at the number below.

Recruit your friends. The more people we have fighting for healthy air, the more effective we will be. Together we will speak with one voice to insist that Congress protect and defend the Clean Air Act.

To learn more or get involved, please contact: Amy Cookson at acookson@lungne.org or (207) 624-0323