

June 18, 2012

The Honorable Sherrod Brown

The Honorable Rob Portman

The Honorable Steve Austria

The Honorable Steven C. LaTourette

The Honorable John A. Boehner

The Honorable Robert E. Latta

The Honorable Steve Chabot

The Honorable Jim Renacci

The Honorable Marcia L. Fudge

The Honorable Tim Ryan

The Honorable Bob Gibbs

The Honorable Jean Schmidt

The Honorable Bill Johnson

The Honorable Steve Stivers

The Honorable Jim Jordan

The Honorable Betty Sutton

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur

The Honorable Pat Tiberi

The Honorable Dennis J. Kucinich

The Honorable Michael Turner

Dear Ohio Senators and Representatives:

As university and college scientists and educators living and working in the Buckeye state, we applaud the rules adopted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency imposing limits on mercury emissions and other hazardous air toxics. These federal rules help protect the air we breathe, the local fish we eat, and the wildlife and natural spaces we love from harmful pollution originating in Ohio and elsewhere. Scientific studies clearly and definitively demonstrate that these emissions are hazardous to human health. We are concerned that these rules will be overturned, weakened or delayed by the Congress in the coming weeks. We urge you to vote against any action diminishing the U.S. EPA's Mercury and Air Toxics Standard (MATS).

Mercury and the other air toxics covered by MATS are potent neurotoxins that impact the health of humans, wildlife, and ecosystems (e.g. services, provisioning, etc.). Our children are most vulnerable to these impacts, with fetal exposures to mercury resulting in deleterious impacts to language, memory, visual-motor skills, and attention. In adults, exposure to mercury can damage the nervous system, with newer research showing possible impacts on the immune and cardiovascular systems. Most of mercury's harms to human health come from consuming contaminated fish. Once deposited on the surface waters of our state, mercury is converted to methylmercury where it is consumed and biomagnified ~1-million fold up the food chain. Ecologically-relevant and sub-lethal concentrations of methylmercury can affect the growth, survival, and reproduction of fish, birds, and other animals. Large sports fish, like the largemouth bass in the Little Miami River or the largemouth bass, crappie, and saugeye found in Charles Mill Lake, are most vulnerable to these effects. Recreational anglers and their families, including tribal groups and others consuming these fish can accumulate harmful amounts of methylmercury. There is also increasing and compelling evidence that mercury deposition can impact the terrestrial ecosystem, namely songbirds, bats, and other insectivores.

Ohio ranks third nationally in mercury air emissions from all sources, and second for mercury emissions from energy generating units. While the Ohio EPA has taken some steps to reduce mercury exposures through its mercury product law, this effort falls short of addressing sources of mercury and other air toxics harming Ohio's people and animals. The U.S. EPA's MATS rules provide an important path to protecting the air and water in our state by limiting the emissions from

facilities in Ohio and other states. The U.S. EPA estimates that the MATS rules will prevent up to 560 deaths in our state, and result in \$1.9 to \$4.6 billion of health benefits to Ohioans in 2016.

We, Ohio university and college scientists, urge you to maintain U.S. EPA's MATS rules in the interests of ensuring public health, wildlife, natural beauty, and the economy of the state we call home.

Sincerely,

**Chad Hammerschmidt**

*Associate Professor*

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Atin Adhikari**

*Assistant Professor*

Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati

**Joseph Adler**

*Professor*

Asian Studies and Religious Studies  
Kenyon College

**Heather A. Allen**

*Professor*

Chemistry  
The Ohio State University

**C. Stuart Baxter**

*Associate Professor*

Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati

**Katlin Bowman**

*Ph.D. Candidate*

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Hunt Brown**

*Senior Lecturer*

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Joseph Carlin**

*Professor and Assistant Chair*

Department of Microbiology  
Miami University

**Songlin Cheng**

*Associate Professor*

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Wentworth Clapham**

*Professor*

Department of Biological, Geological, and  
Environmental Sciences  
Cleveland State University

**Scott Clark**

*Professor Emeritus*

Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati

**Susan Clayton**

*Whitmore-Williams Professor of Psychology*

Psychology and Environmental Studies  
The College of Wooster

**J. Mac Crawford**

*Associate Professor of Clinical Public Health*

College of Public Health, Division of  
Environmental Health Sciences  
The Ohio State University

**Scott Cummings**

*Professor*

Department of Chemistry  
Kenyon College

**Ellen Currano**

*Assistant Professor*

Geology and Environmental Earth Science  
Miami University

**Jeffrey Dean***Chair and Professor*

Department of Biological, Geological, and  
Environmental Sciences  
Cleveland State University

**Matthew Elrod***Professor*

Chemistry and Biochemistry  
Oberlin College

**D.J. Ferguson***Assistant Professor*

Microbiology  
Miami University

**Ernest Foulkes***Professor (retired)*

Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati

**Terri Harford***Postdoctoral Fellow*

Department of Biological, Geological, and  
Environmental Sciences  
Cleveland State University

**Earl Heithaus***Professor*

Biology  
Kenyon College

**Shuk-mei Ho***Professor*

Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati

**Dennis Hubbard***Professor*

Geology  
Oberlin College

**Allen Hunt***Professor*

Physics Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Amy Itescu***Associate To*

Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati

**Ramanitharan Kandiah***Assistant Professor*

International Center for Water Resources  
Management  
Central State University

**Karen Keptner***MS, OTR/L Occupational Therapist*

Health Sciences and Health Professions  
Cleveland State University

**Sadik Khuder***Professor*

Public Health and Preventive Medicine  
University of Toledo

**Jaclyn Klaus***Graduate Student*

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Mark Krekeler***Assistant Professor*

Geology and Environmental Earth Science  
Miami University-Hamilton

**Bryan Mark***Associate Professor and Research Scientist*

Byrd Polar Research Center  
The Ohio State University

**Dan Marsh***Ph.D. Candidate*

Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Robert Mauck***Associate Professor*

Biology  
Kenyon College

**Carl McDaniel***Visiting Professor (Oberlin College);*

*Professor Emeritus, Rensselaer Polytechnic  
Institute, Troy, NY  
Environmental Studies  
Oberlin College*

**Colleen McLean***Instructor*

Geological and Environmental Sciences  
Youngstown State University

**James Metzger**  
*Professor and Associate Chair*  
Horticulture and Crop Science  
The Ohio State University

**Mark Moritz**  
*Assistant Professor*  
Department of Anthropology  
The Ohio State University

**P. Larry Phelan**  
*Professor*  
Entomology  
The Ohio State University

**Lynette Phillips**  
*Assistant Professor*  
Epidemiology  
Kent State University

**Alvaro Puga**  
*Professor*  
Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

**Jason Rech**  
*Associate Professor*  
Geology and Environmental Earth Science  
Miami University

**Ian Renne**  
*Assistant Professor*  
Evolution and Ecology  
Youngstown State University

**Ira Sasowsky**  
*Professor of Geology and Environmental Science;  
Director, Center for Environmental Studies*  
Department of Geology and Environmental Science  
University of Akron

**David Stradling**  
*Professor*  
Department of History  
University of Cincinnati

**Qinghua Sun**  
*Associate Professor*  
College of Public Health  
The Ohio State University

**Pheruza Tarapore**  
*Research Assistant Professor*  
Department of Environmental Health  
University of Cincinnati

**Astrea Taylor**  
*Graduate Student*  
Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Rebecca Teed**  
*Assistant Professor*  
Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Wright State University

**Jeffrey Thompson**  
*Associate Professor*  
Department of Biology  
Denison University

**Amy Townsend-Small**  
*Assistant Professor*  
Department of Geology  
University of Cincinnati

**Linda Weavers**  
*John C. Geupel Professor*  
Civil, Environmental and Geodetic Engineering  
The Ohio State University

**Michael Weintraub**  
*Associate Professor*  
Department of Environmental Sciences  
University of Toledo

**Mark Wilson**  
*Lewis M. and Marian Senter Nixon Professor of the  
Natural Sciences*  
Geology  
The College of Wooster