



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN - 7 2012

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

The Honorable Andy Harris, MD
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Environment
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-6301

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On September 22, 2011, you requested data and analyses from five epidemiological studies used in the benefits analysis for the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. As outlined in my November 30, 2011 letter, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency agreed to take action under 2 CFR 215.36 to request the information produced with the EPA funds, to the extent that this information remains available. Only two of the five epidemiological studies identified in your request were used in the benefits analyses and were the focus of our data collection efforts – the Cancer Prevention Study II compiled by the American Cancer Society (Pope et al., 2002) and the Harvard Six Cities Study (Laden et al., 2006). The remaining three studies – the Cancer Prevention Study I compiled by the American Cancer Society and two Nurses Health studies – were not used in our benefits analyses and, therefore, EPA did not request data for these studies.

On January 9, 2012, the EPA sent letters to New York University and Harvard University requesting any research data produced with the EPA grant funds relating to the Pope et al. (2002) and Laden et al. (2006) studies, respectively. We provided copies of these letters to your staff. Enclosed are the data provided by these universities in response to these requests including additional information from the researchers specifying a key to clarify the data contained in the spreadsheets. The enclosed data represent the data that were developed with the EPA grant monies. We note that the American Cancer Society and Harvard Six Cities studies are large epidemiological research projects that have received funding from a number of sources.

For the Laden et al. (2006) study, the health event data (i.e., deaths) were obtained from the National Death Index (NDI), which is part of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These data are available to researchers exclusively for medical and health research statistical analyses. To obtain data from the NDI, the Harvard University

researchers signed a confidentiality agreement in accordance with section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. § 242m(d)) promising not to publish or release data in any form to any party if a particular individual was identifiable. The Public Health Services Act provides that the data collected by NCHS may be used only for the purpose for which they were obtained; any effort to determine the identity of any reported cases, or to use the information for any purpose other than for health statistical reporting and analysis, would violate the statutory restriction.

In the data set provided by Harvard University, the researchers indicated that they believe these data could not be used to identify individuals without additional analysis and information. Additionally, we coordinated extensively with CDC to determine whether there may be restrictions on disclosure of these data to your Committee. CDC advised that any NDI information about an individual that is more specific than what was provided by Harvard University may not be shared with anyone who has not already signed a confidentiality agreement with NCHS.

The enclosed data complete our response to the questions you raised in the September 22, 2011 letter. If you have further questions, please contact me or your staff may call Cheryl Mackay in EPA's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations at (202) 564-2023.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina McCarthy", with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Gina McCarthy
Assistant Administrator

Enclosures