

June 18, 2009

The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

Dear Administrator Jackson:

On behalf of the undersigned groups, we urge the Environmental Protection Agency to further consider the consequences its proposed endangerment finding would have on rural America.

America's farmers and ranchers produce the food and fiber that sustains families around the globe. The hard work this entails is essential to rural America. However, under EPA's proposed public health endangerment ruling, much of that work could be construed as a public health liability.

From the methane gas expelled by livestock, to the diesel that powers tractors and the petroleum byproducts in fertilizer used to maximize yields, hydrocarbons and greenhouse gasses are an integral part of feeding and clothing the world. EPA's proposed health finding would leave the agricultural community, among other industries, legally liable for the purported negative health effects of those emissions. The frenzy of litigation that would ensue would unfairly burden small businesses across rural America.

We urge the EPA to extend the public comment period from 60 to 120 days, the normal length of time allotted for comment. Given the significance of this finding, all interested parties should be given time to understand and respond to this proposal.

In these tough economic times, our economy simply cannot afford a drastic regulatory misstep such as the proposed endangerment finding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Agri-Women
American Sheep Institute
Beartooth Stock Association (MT)
California Women for Agriculture
Illinois Agri-Women
Independent Beef Association of N. Dakota
Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska
Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas
Intertribal Agriculture Council
Kansas Agri-Women

Livestock Marketing Association
Merced County (CA) Farm Bureau
Michigan Agri-Women
Minnesota Agri-Women
National Association of Wheat Growers
New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association
New Mexico Wool Growers, Inc.
New Mexico Federal Lands Council
U.S. Cattlemen's Association
Washington Cattlemen's Association
Women Involved in Farm Economics