

* Alabama Environmental Council * Clean Air Council *
* Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) * Michigan Environmental Council *
* Ohio Environmental Council * Scenic Hudson * Southern Alliance for Clean Energy *

For Immediate Release: May 12, 2004

Contact Info:

Alabama Environmental Council: Bart Slawson, 205-870-1997
Clean Air Council: Michael Fiorentino, 215-567-4004, ext. 238
GASP: Rachel Filippini, 412-441-6650
Michigan Environmental Council: David Gard, 517-487-9539
Ohio Environmental Council: Kurt Waltzer, 614-487-7506
Scenic Hudson: Shari Calnero, 845-473-4440, ext. 280
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy: Ulla-Britt Reeves, 828-254-6776

Clean Air Task Force (counsel): Jonathan Lewis, 617-292-0234 ext 12

**ENVIROS ASSERT IN FEDERAL COURT:
BUSH ADMINISTRATION INDUSTRIAL AIR POLLUTION RULES
CHANGES VIOLATE THE LAW AND
THREATEN PUBLIC HEALTH**

Washington, D.C. – Bush Administration changes to important Clean Air Act rules about when power plants and other large industrial sources of air pollution must clean up are illegal, and threaten public health, according to a legal brief filed yesterday by seven local and regional environmental organizations in federal appellate court here.

Representing the seven regional groups, the Clean Air Task Force (CATF) argued in its brief that the changes to the New Source Review rules are illegal because they significantly weaken requirements enacted by Congress. “These rules allow changes to occur at facilities like refineries, power plants, paper mills, and other large industrial facilities, while completely escaping pollution review and the requirement to put on controls,” said Jonathan Lewis, the CATF attorney representing the groups. “The Bush Administration has illegally caved to corporate interests at the expense of people who breathe.”

“The rule changes mean that our clients’ members, who live and work near these facilities are breathing more pollution than the Clean Air Act allows,” said Lewis. “The pollutants emitted by the plants create ozone smog, and add soot to the air. Increases in these pollutants mean our members living near these facilities experience reduced quality of life – they face increased risk of asthma attacks, heart attacks, lost work days, increased medical bills, and even premature death than would have been the case without the rules changes. More than 30,000 people die prematurely each year because of excess power plant pollution – the American people should be outraged about this.”

Established more than two decades ago, the New Source Review program was created to require industrial facilities to install up-to-date pollution controls when they make any physical or operational change that increases air pollution emissions.

American Lung Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, Environmental Defense, and Sierra Club are also on the brief filed today, represented by attorneys for Earthjustice.

In addition to environmental groups, attorneys general and other government officials from fifteen states filed a brief today opposing the rules changes.

#####