

Honorable Tommy G. Thompson
Governor
State of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53707-7863

Dear Governor Thompson:

I am pleased to inform you that today we are taking the next step to move forward with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) far-reaching approach to protect the health of over a hundred million Americans living in the eastern United States from harmful levels of air pollution. This action should significantly reduce air pollution from coal-fired power plants and other large industrial facilities. Not only do those emissions threaten public health in nearby areas, they also threaten communities hundreds of miles away. Reducing these emissions will prevent thousands of smog-related illnesses each year, including aggravated cases of childhood asthma. This plan can be achieved through cost-effective, readily achievable reductions.

After EPA issued the NO_x SIP Call in September 1998 to reduce smog across the eastern United States, several parties challenged us in court. Last May, as an interim measure, the Court stayed the requirement that States submit their plans to address transported smog. On March 3, 2000, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit issued a decision largely upholding the NO_x SIP Call.

Although it generally upheld the rule, the Court decided that the current evidence does not support including Wisconsin in the NO_x SIP Call at this time. EPA will soon take action reflecting this portion of the decision. I applaud Wisconsin's past participation in multi-state efforts to reduce smog. EPA remains committed to working with Wisconsin and other surrounding states as you develop strategies needed to reduce smog in southeastern Wisconsin and other parts of the Lake Michigan region.

I look forward to working with you and your constituents to provide effective ways to improve air quality.

Sincerely,

Carol M. Browner

cc: George Meyer
James E. Doyle