

Legislation grants federally enforceable regulations of specific pollutants for the first time

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Representative Mike Quigley (IL-05) reiterated his support for strong EPA regulation authority and protection of public health by voting against anti-regulatory, anti-environment legislation for the third time in two weeks.

“The arguments of the past weeks are based on the assumption that you must pick between creating and retaining jobs or protecting the environment and Americans’ health. This is a false notion born of scare tactics and misinformation, because the two sides are not mutually exclusive,” said Rep. Quigley. **“It’s imperative that we allow the EPA to do its job and provide the Agency with the tools it needs to protect the public from hazardous pollution levels emitted by coal facilities, industrial boilers, cement-kilns and the like, which have been proven to cause cancer and other major health problems.”**

On October 14, Rep. Quigley voted in opposition to the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act (H.R. 2273). Quigley offered an amendment and spoke out against the measure, which fails to establish a national legal standard for coal ash pollution levels and places significant limits on the ability of the EPA to conduct an independent review of state programs. It was the third bill in two weeks aimed at delaying regulations for major industrial polluters.

During consideration, Quigley proposed an amendment to H.R. 2273 to require the EPA to look at whether a state has established a program that meets management and disposal requirements, rather than whether it is simply implementing a program that meets the requirements. In addition, it would have clarified that the EPA does not need to defer to a state in making a finding that its program is deficient.

Rep. Quigley also voted against the EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011 (H.R. 2250) and the Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act (H.R. 2681), both bills designed to delay actions to reduce pollution from boilers and cement plants, respectively. These delays will allow up to 20,000

premature deaths, 12,000 heart attacks, and 123,000 asthma attacks that could have been avoided.

Quigley introduced an amendment to H.R. 2250 that stated the EPA Administrator may not delay actions to reduce pollution from waste incinerators or industrial boilers at chemical facilities, oil refineries, or large manufacturing facilities. Video and text from his speech on this amendment can be found [here](#). On October 5, Rep. Quigley worked with Rep. Edward Markey (MA-07) to introduce an amendment to H.R. 2681, similar to that of the EPA Regulatory Relief Act but focusing on the pollution created at cement plants. Both amendments were voted down.

“According to the EPA, people living near unlined coal ash ponds – where water is contaminated by arsenic and ash is mixed with coal refuse – have a one-in-fifty risk of cancer,” said Rep. Quigley. **“Those living near boilers and cement plants face similar health threats. We must stop stripping our land, polluting our air and water, and do what’s right.”**

Without Rep. Quigley’s amendments, the anti-regulation bills will nullify substantial EPA rules that have been delayed for more than 10 years. The bills also prohibit the EPA from requiring facilities to comply with any new standards for at least an additional five years and set no final compliance deadline, allowing for indefinite delay. Industrial boilers and incinerators will not need to reduce their emissions before 2018, at the earliest, three years later than the EPA’s current plan.

Environmental protection and public health has been a primary concern throughout Rep. Quigley’s tenure in office. In November 2010, the Congressman authored a letter to the EPA calling on the agency to regulate the reuse and storage of coal ash. The letter was co-signed by 73 members of Congress. The text of this letter can be found [here](#).

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