

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee

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December 12, 2008

The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
777 North Capitol St, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

On behalf of MWAQC, I'm writing to alert you and the COG Board of Directors about a proposed EPA action that could have a significant effect on air quality and transportation planning in the metropolitan Washington region. On December 5 EPA Region 3 notified Governor O'Malley that EPA intends to designate Montgomery County and Prince George's County as part of the Baltimore nonattainment area for the 2006 daily fine particle standard.

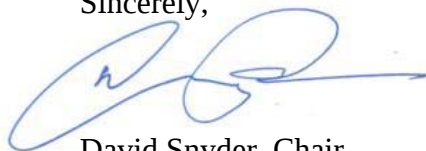
The proposed action is a reversal of an earlier EPA letter in August proposing to designate Montgomery County and Prince George's County as in attainment of the daily fine particle standard, along with the rest of the metropolitan Washington region.

The proposed action could have significant consequences for TPB's long standing and successful transportation conformity process as well as disrupt the region's outstanding air quality planning process. MWAQC hopes that the COG Board will discuss the action and participate with MWAQC and TPB in developing a regional position on the issue. EPA asked for comments from the affected states and agencies by February 3, 2009.

Given the short time for response, it is urgent that the matter be discussed now and that we act in a concerted manner to influence EPA's designation process.

Thank you for your help on this matter. I have asked Stuart Freudberg and Joan Rohlf to work with David Robertson and Ron Kirby to help insure a coordinated approach among the COG Board, MWAQC, and TPB on this issue.

Sincerely,



David Snyder, Chair