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May 15, 2019

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1301 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C., 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

I write to urge you to reinstate the Particulate Matter (PM) panel of the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC). The current CASAC requested this action in their April 11, 2019 review of the draft Integrated Risk Assessment (ISA) for Particulate Matter, as follows:

> *The CASAC recommends that the EPA reappoint the previous CASAC PM panel (or appoint a panel with similar expertise)... The panel should be appointed in time to review the Second Draft ISA.*[1]

As referenced in CASAC's comments, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has long relied on specified pollutant review panels to assist the CASAC in developing scientific consensus around each of the six criteria pollutants regulated by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). But you disbanded the PM panel last October, resulting in the dismissal of the two dozen researchers who had been convened to provide expert advice from across the relevant scientific disciplines to properly inform air pollution standards.[2] In its place, you tasked CASAC – a seven-person panel that lacks an epidemiologist – to review the relevant science on its own.

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[1] Louis Anthony Cox et al, "CASAC Review of the EPA's *Integrated Science Assessment for Particulate Matter (External Review Draft – October 2018)*," Environmental Protection Agency, April 11, 2019, accessed here: https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/LookupWebReportsLastMonthCASAC/6CBCBBC3025E13B4852583D90047B352/$File/EPA-CASAC-19-002%20.pdf

[2] Dino Grandoni and Juliet Eilperin, "EPA scraps pair of air pollution science panels," *Washington Post*, October 13, 2018, accessed here: https://www.washingtonpost.com/energy-environment/2018/10/14/epa-scraps-pair-air-pollution-science-panels/?utm_term=.122fc2652c24

Former members of the PM panel wrote multiple letters objecting to this decision and provided over one hundred pages of comments on the draft ISA.[3] Many expert scientists across disciplines provided public comments at CASAC meetings and teleconferences, crying foul on the disbanding of the panel and the process being used by CASAC to review the body of evidence,[4] and current CASAC members spoke up at meetings to say that the panel lacked the expertise to adequately review the relevant science.[5]

In its April letter, CASAC officially confirmed its inability to provide a comprehensive expert review of the PM National Ambient Air Quality Standards documents. With this in mind, it would be inappropriate for EPA to accept CASAC's review of the draft ISA on particulate matter. EPA must ensure it is working to protect human health and the environment using the best available science, and I am glad that CASAC has the integrity to inform you when they are unable to meet that standard. I urge you to follow their advice to reinstate the PM panel.

Sincerely,

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Chairwoman
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

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[3] Christopher Frey et al, "Letter and attachments to CASAC and to Docket EPA-HQ-ORD-2014-0859 from former members of 2015-2018 CASAC Particulate Matter Review Panel," December 10, 2018, accessed here: https://www.sciencemag.org/sites/default/files/PMRP%20Letter%20to%20CASAC%20181210%20Final%20181210.pdf

[4] *See:* Lianne Sheppard, "Sheppard Oral Comments," Environmental Protection Agency, December 12, 2018, accessed here: https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/971B36E4305E5EDA85258361004DB5B7/$File/Sheppard+Oral+Comments.pdf ;
Corwin Zigler, "Spoken Comments by Corwin Zigler at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Chartered Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) Public Meeting on Particulate Matter, Environmental Protection Agency, December 12, 2018, accessed here: https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/971B36E4305E5EDA85258361004DB5B7/$File/Sheppard+Oral+Comments.pdf ; *and*
Albert Rizzo, "To U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) on the first External Review Draft of the Integrated Science Assessment for Particulate Matter," Environmental Protection Agency, accessed here: https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/10EE89DE836EE3E28525836200063456/$File/PM+ISA+statement-from-albert-rizzo.pdf

[5] "Preliminary Comments from Members of the CASAC on EPA's *Integrated Science Assessment for Particulate Matter (External Review Draft – October 2018)*," Environmental Protection Agency, December 10, 2018, pps 2, 28, and 102, accessed here: https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/E9B02B3DC858DC258525835F005FAC0A/$File/Preliminary+CASAC+PM+ISA+Comments-121018.pdf