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Title: Review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter

Hello. Thank you so much for meeting with us today to discuss the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter.

My name is Tori Goebel and I serve as the National Organizer for Young Evangelicals for Climate Action, a ministry of the Evangelical Environmental Network.

Since YECA's founding in 2012, we have engaged over 25,000 young people in our mission to love God and love our neighbors through bold, wholehearted, and faithful climate action in our church and community in order to create a more just, equitable, and loving world¹.

We have three main pillars of our work in order to carry out our mission. The first is mobilizing our generation. The main way we do this is through leadership development programs, including a fellowship for college students and young Christians in frontline communities. The second part of our work is holding our leaders accountable for bold and equitable climate solutions. The third part of our work is engaging with our churches in order to see older evangelical leaders take meaningful climate action.

¹ Yecaction.org

Thank you again for meeting with us today. I look forward to joining with EEN to discuss the importance of this review and how science must play a key role in these standards.

At YECA, we are called to love God and love our neighbor, and that includes taking action to reduce harmful pollution that has lasting impacts on public health and our environment. As Christians, we want our neighbors to live safe, healthy lives free from the devastating impacts of pollution. PM 2.5 is extremely harmful, especially for the most vulnerable populations in our society. These fine particles seep into lungs and the bloodstream, leading to diseases in the respiratory, neurological, and cardiovascular systems. Studies have shown that it is communities of color and low income communities who face highly disproportionate impacts from PM 2.5 pollution.

For those living in poverty, the burden of this devastating pollution is 1.35 times higher than the overall population. For people of color, the burden is 1.28 times higher and for Black communities specifically, that number goes up to 1.54 times higher than the overall population. Studies show that this pattern exists not only nationally but within most states and counties². Simply put, this is a justice issue that is widespread and worthy of quick, science-based action.

According to the EPA's website in an article about the racial disparities of PM 2.5 pollution, quote "EPA's goal is to provide an environment where all people enjoy the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to maintain a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work."³ As a young person of faith, I wholeheartedly agree with this sentiment and that is why it is imperative to act swiftly for the sake of overburdened communities.

In order to fulfill its very mission, the EPA must use the best available science to set standards that will improve public health and even save lives.

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5844406/>

³

<https://www.epa.gov/sciencematters/study-finds-exposure-air-pollution-higher-people-color-regardless-region-or-income>

Thank you.