

Washington, D.C. - Rep. David Price (D-NC) gave the following remarks for the Congressional Record today as the House of Representatives considered H.R. 910, the Energy Tax Prevention Act. The legislation would roll back provisions of the Clean Air Act and bar the Environmental Protection Agency from regulating greenhouse gases.

"Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 910. While cynically called the Energy Tax Prevention Act by its sponsors, the bill could more aptly be named the 'Dirty Air Act'.

"This legislation would overturn EPA's scientific finding that greenhouse gases endanger human health and welfare, which stemmed from a landmark 2007 Supreme Court decision, and prevent the EPA from using the Clean Air Act -- now or in the future -- to limit greenhouse gas pollution from power plants and other industrial sources. This reckless and misguided attack on our environment and public health will allow more pollution into the air we breathe and threaten the health of Americans across the country.

"Supporters of the bill claim that setting standards for greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act will cost jobs and undermine the competitiveness of America's manufacturers. But the argument that clean air somehow poses a hazard to the economy is as ridiculous now as it was in the 1970s, when the major polluters used it to try and stop enactment of landmark environmental laws. Rolling back the EPA's authority to limit pollution – whether it be carbon or lead – won't create a single job. It will simply undo 40 years of progress toward a cleaner environment and better public health.

"In fact, the very provisions of the Clean Air Act that this bill attacks have a forty-year track record of delivering cleaner air and improved health, along with the benefits of enormous growth in the economy. In its first 20 years, the Clean Air Act prevented an estimated 200,000 premature deaths. Some 1.7 million tons of toxic emissions have been removed from our air each year since 1990. Innovations spurred by the Act have made our cars up to 95 percent cleaner today than they were in the past. EPA economists estimate that the total benefits of the Clean Air Act amount to 30 times its costs.

"Passage of this bill would also mark the first time in history that Congress has approved legislation to overrule an objective scientific finding. Congress enacted the Clean Air Act precisely to require the EPA to make science-based decisions about the threats to health and

welfare presented by air pollution instead of allowing such decisions to be driven by political ideology or special interests. And that is exactly what EPA's scientists have done: under both the Bush and Obama administrations, objective scientific studies have found that greenhouse gases pose a real and indisputable threat.

"Recently, more than 2,500 scientists – from all 50 states – sent a letter to Congress calling on Members to support EPA's updated carbon pollution standards under the Clean Air Act, noting that the 'science-based law has prevented 400,000 premature deaths and hundreds of millions of cases of respiratory and cardiovascular disease during the 40 years since it was first passed—all without diminishing economic growth.'

"Rather than heeding the science and letting the EPA and the states do their job to protect public health and our environment, this bill would give the nation's biggest polluters a free pass to keep polluting and place the health of our nation -- particularly our children, elderly citizens and other vulnerable populations -- at risk. A vote for this bill is a vote against the commonsense Clean Air Act provisions that keep our air clean and protect our public health. I urge my colleagues to support science and the Clean Air Act and oppose H.R. 910."

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