



Written by [Steven J. DuBord](#) on December 8, 2009

## EPA Declares Carbon Dioxide a Danger to Public Health

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has officially declared that carbon dioxide and other so-called greenhouse gases are dangerous to public health and welfare, paving the way for much stricter emissions standards.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced the “endangerment finding” on December 7. This ruling was needed to allow new emissions regulations for automobiles to move forward, and it sets the stage for large-scale emitters of these gases such as factories, power plants, and refineries to be hit with limitations on their output.



“These long overdue findings cement 2009’s place in history as the year when the U.S. government began addressing the challenge of greenhouse-gas pollution and seizing the opportunity of clean-energy reform,” Jackson declared in a statement. The Obama administration had indicated earlier in the year that it would make this controversial decision, but the timing of the announcement is meant to coincide with the opening of the global climate summit in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The EPA decision gives President Barack Obama a way to show the leaders of the Copenhagen conference that the United States is committed to dealing with climate change. President Obama is scheduled to attend on December 18, and he can be expected to point to the EPA ruling as evidence of U.S. determination to cut its greenhouse-gas emissions.

This is also meant to put roundabout pressure on developing countries such as Communist China and India, where the greatest increase in emissions is expected in the future. But these countries have shown an unwillingness to impede their own rate of development unless more advanced nations lead the way by first cutting their own emissions. The EPA decision is meant to put the pressure back on the developing nations to comply.

Opponents of the EPA ruling, such as U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Thomas Donohue, stated that it “could result in a top-down command-and-control regime that will choke off growth by adding new mandates to virtually every major construction and renovation project. The devil will be in the details, and we look forward to working with the government to ensure we don’t stifle our economic recovery.”

The National Association of Manufacturers, a U.S. industry trade group, said the EPA action wouldn’t significantly combat climate change, and “is certain to come at a huge cost to the economy.”

The Competitive Enterprise Institute, a self-described “public interest group dedicated to free enterprise and limited government,” has even announced that it will file suit in federal court to overturn the EPA endangerment finding. CEI pointed to major scientific issues being ignored by the EPA, including the recent [Climategate](#) fraud scandal.

“EPA is clinging for dear life to the notion that the global climate models are holding up,” said CEI



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General Counsel Sam Kazman. “In reality, those models are about to sink under the growing weight of evidence that they are fabrications.”

“Today’s decision by EPA will trigger costly and time-consuming permitting requirements for tens of thousands of previously unregulated small businesses under the Clean Air Act,” said CEI Senior Fellow Marlo Lewis. “A more potent Anti-Stimulus Package would be hard to imagine.”

“The sensible solution,” Lewis pointed out, “would be for Congress to pass legislation, such as that proposed by Rep. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee that would pre-empt the EPA from regulating carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions.”

One can only hope that the arguments of the cooler heads in U.S. business and manufacturing and the Competitive Enterprise Institute will prevail over the global-warming hysteria that has taken hold of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*Photo of EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson: AP Images*



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