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EPA's proposal to rescind regulations on greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles is a major hit to public health and climate action, health professionals say

On July 29, 2025, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin announced a proposal to rescind the [Endangerment Finding](#), a 2009 rule that enabled the EPA to regulate six key well-mixed greenhouse gases, including CO₂ and methane, as air pollutants under the Clean Air Act.

The [EPA's announcement](#) says if finalized, the proposal would repeal all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions regulations for motor vehicles and engines.

Given that the [transportation sector accounts for one of the largest sources](#) of GHG emissions in the U.S., this rescission would represent a major setback to efforts to reverse the detrimental effects of climate change.

As the 2009 Endangerment Finding details, CO₂ is an especially concerning air pollutant because it does not immediately break down into smaller molecules and can linger in the atmosphere for [hundreds of years](#). This means that even if the rollback is eventually reversed under the next administration, the consequences could be felt for generations to come.

Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action (MiCCA) issued the following statement regarding the human health implications of this proposal that puts the economic interests of polluters ahead of the public's wellbeing and the stability of our environment:

The EPA says the Endangerment Finding is costing Americans \$54 billion, but it cites no sources in its announcement to support this claim. Meanwhile, the agency is overlooking the wide range of negative economic effects of allowing greenhouse gas emissions to run rampant, which directly hurt human health as a result of tailpipe pollution and contribute to more extreme weather events as the planet heats up.

"Rolling back the EPA's ability to regulate planet-warming air pollutants at a time when extreme heat and humidity coupled with wildfire smoke has become a common summer-day occurrence in Michigan is unconscionable. Doctors, nurses, and first responders know that these extreme conditions make air quality worse and exacerbate underlying health conditions, bringing more and more patients to our offices, clinics, and emergency departments," stated **Dr. Elizabeth**



(Lisa) Del Buono, founder and board chair of Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action. “But it doesn’t have to be this way when there are cheaper and more abundant alternative fuel sources like solar and wind that don't make people sick.”

“Science has linked the gases that come out of tailpipes (CO₂, methane and nitrous oxide) to a plethora of health issues including asthma, COPD, cardiovascular diseases, premature births and neurological conditions. Increased exposure to these gases results in increased rates of hospitalizations due to exacerbation of chronic health conditions,” said **Amy Rogghe, Physician Assistant and founder of the Michigan Electric Vehicle Alliance.** “Rolling back the EPA's regulation standards for GHG emissions from motor vehicles would be detrimental to public health, especially in frontline communities where people are already vulnerable due to poorer air quality. My patients will suffer, your loved ones will suffer and the damage done is not quickly reversible.”

“My patients with asthma and COPD really notice when the air quality is bad. They come to the clinic asking for more inhalers to ease their breathing—and some end up in the ER,” noted **Dr. Alexander Rabin, a pulmonary and critical care physician at the University of Michigan.** “Over the last few years, we’ve seen an increase in the number of days with poor air quality and excessive heat. I’m worried that if the EPA loses its ability to regulate emissions that contribute to global warming and air pollution, life will only get worse for our most vulnerable patients.”

“Prevention is important in many aspects of our lives. As a primary care doctor I see the impact of the health system making decisions to cut costs. The EPA’s claim to lower cost for consumers is a shortsighted perspective that does not acknowledge the long term consequences of reckless short term goals,” said **Dr. Aisha Harris, family medicine doctor at Harris Family Health in Flint, MI.** “Decreased regulation of greenhouse gas emissions will increase the exposure and burden that greenhouse gases have on our health, which would increase health care complications and costs while also worsening health care access and disparities. This proposal will cost us more financially, economically, and in life years.”

"I am particularly concerned about how this would impact children, whose developing bodies are more vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution,” said **Erin Miller, MD, Board certified internist and pediatrician, who practices in Detroit, MI.** “Exposure to air pollution impacts kids in the moment, by putting them at higher risk for pediatric respiratory conditions, and impacting brain development. These impacts last a lifetime, increasing their risk for respiratory complications as adults and impacting their cognitive development."

“Attempting to roll back the Endangerment Finding will not, despite EPA’s claims, lower costs to consumers. Consumers, or as I like to call them “people,” will pay in the form of poorer health,” wrote **Kindra Weid, RN, BSN, MPH, who works in Chelsea, MI.** “We see this daily in the hospital – people are admitted for acute exacerbations of their chronic heart and/or lung conditions related to extreme heat, poorer air quality, and the consequences of power outages related to extreme weather. Though these outcomes are difficult to measure (e.g., missed days of work, hospital bills, lower quality of life, etc.), they are impactful and can cause death and



extreme hardship. In 2025 alone, it is estimated that flooding, wildfires, and extreme weather have caused [\\$250 billion in economic damage](#). Surely, removing these protections will result in further deaths and damage.”

The Supreme Court ruled in 2007 that the EPA has the authority to regulate GHGs as air pollutants under the Clean Air Act. In making that decision, the Court recognized GHGs endanger public health and welfare due to their role in global warming, which later served as the basis for the Endangerment Finding.

If the current rollback is successful, there likely will be legal challenges, but we hope the EPA will follow evidence-based decision-making and protect the Endangerment Finding.

Brief overview of climate change’s broad health impacts

The Lancet Report, the World Health Organization, and the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health named climate change as the “greatest public health threat of our generation.” Studies estimate that the rate of climate change driven deaths between [250,000](#) and [700,000](#) per year by 2030. This number grows as scientists continue to measure, and does not include the [more than 8 million deaths per year](#) caused by air pollution from burning fossil fuels.

In Michigan, following health impacts can be expected to become increasingly common:

- Increasing burden of infectious disease, including Lyme and other tick- and mosquito-borne illnesses
 - Asthma and respiratory challenges due to worsening air pollution from wildfire smoke and increasing heat and humidity
 - Increased flooding, causing harm through infrastructure failure, housing insecurity, and long-term exposure to mold
 - Failure of essential medical equipment and exposure to extreme temperatures due to increasing power failures as storms grow worse
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