

# Eliminate Funding for Development and Implementation of New Ozone Standards

## Heritage Recommendation:

Prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from using any appropriated funds to implement new ozone standards. This recommendation is in the form of a rider prohibiting any use of funds for this purpose, but does not presume lower spending by the EPA beyond other savings proposed elsewhere.

## Rationale:

Making the standard any more stringent than the current 75 parts per billion (ppb) would impose significant and unnecessary costs on business and taxpayers, in return for marginal environmental benefits. However, the EPA has proposed regulations for a revised standard between 70 ppb and 65 ppb, with the possibility of going as low as 60 ppb.

Concentration levels of ozone have already decreased by 33 percent from 1980 to 2013, and the average number of high ozone days per monitor in a year has decreased by 75 percent as recently as 2012. Furthermore, changing the ozone standard is premature, as the existing standards adopted in 2008 are only just beginning to be implemented. A tighter standard may even be impossible to meet because background levels in some areas of the country have been found to regularly exceed 60 ppb.

The costs of such a stringent and unwarranted standard could be devastating. A study by NERA Economic Consulting estimates \$2.2 trillion in compliance costs from 2017 through 2040 for a 60 ppb standard. Based on EPA data for the three-year period from 2010 to 2012, over 60 percent of those counties would be in violation of a 70 ppb standard; 81 percent for a 65 ppb standard; 93 percent for a 60 ppb standard.

## Additional Reading:

- Daren Bakst, “Reining in the EPA Through the Power of the Purse,” Heritage Foundation *Issue Brief* No. 4264, August 19, 2014, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2014/08/reining-in-the-epa-through-the-power-of-the-purse>.
- Daren Bakst and Katie Tubb, “EPA Ozone Regulations Could be Most Expensive in U.S. History,” *The Daily Signal*, August 4, 2014, <http://dailysignal.com/2014/08/04/epa-ozone-regulation-expensive-u-s-history/>.
- Andrew Grossman, “High On Ozone: The EPA’s Latest Assault on Jobs and the Economy,” Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 3330, August 1, 2011, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2011/08/high-on-ozone-the-epas-latest-assault-on-jobs-and-the-economy>.
- Angela Antonelli, “Can No One Stop the EPA?” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 1129, July 8, 1997, [http://thf\\_media.s3.amazonaws.com/1997/pdf/bg1129.pdf](http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/1997/pdf/bg1129.pdf).

## Calculations:

This recommendation reduces the size of government, but no specific savings are assumed from prohibiting these regulations from taking effect.