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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1901

October 27, 2004

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
ENERGY AND AIR QUALITY
ENVIRONMENT AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

DEMOCRATIC AT-LARGE WHIP
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CO-CHAIR
AFFORDABLE MEDICINES
TASK FORCE
CO-CHAIR

Mr. Ed Gillespie
Chairman
Republican National Committee
310 First Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Mr. Gillespie:

The recent Republican National Committee (RNC) mailing about President Bush's Clear Skies Initiative states that the President's proposal would succeed in "cutting air pollution by 70% over 15 years."¹ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) analyses of the Clear Skies Initiative that have been available since 2002 reveal that this statement is simply not true.

EPA modeling makes clear that the goal to reduce emissions by 70 percent will not be achieved over the next 15 years (by 2019), as the RNC has told voters. According to the EPA's *Initial Results of Updated Clear Skies Analysis*, released on July 1, 2003, the Bush Administration's Clear Skies Initiative would reduce annual SO₂, NO_x, and mercury emissions by only 63 percent by 2020. This means that even a year after the 15 year window referenced in the RNC document, power plant air pollution would still exceed the 70 percent cap of the Clear Skies Act by an additional 1,260,000 tons.

At a time when the States have to work hard to achieve every additional ton of air pollution reduction, more than a million tons of extra air pollution is a substantial discrepancy.

Under the Clear Skies Initiative, a substantial majority of the emissions reductions would be achieved by reducing SO₂ emissions. Yet the cap of SO₂ emissions would be attained so distantly in the future that EPA modelers refuse to identify a specific year that the 3 million ton annual emissions cap will be attained. At a congressional briefing, the EPA staff said the cap could be reached "maybe in 2025." This is startlingly different than your claim that a 70 percent reduction would be mandated over the next 15 years, or by 2019.

Many experts believe that the Clear Skies Initiative will allow more air pollution than current law. Regardless of policy disputes about whether the Clean Air Act should be weakened, voters should be able to rely on the veracity of information sent to them by the Republican

¹ This statement was presumably based on the Bush Administration's proposed goal of capping sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emissions at 3 million tons, nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions at 1.7 million tons, and mercury emissions at 15 tons, or 4.7 million tons per year on an aggregate basis. This would amount to a 70.8% reduction in emissions of these pollutants from levels emitted in 2000.

National Committee. EPA modeling clearly demonstrates that the RNC has made a blatantly false assertion about the President's most significant air policy initiative.

Mr. Gillespie, I urge you to stop publishing materials that falsely claim that the Clear Skies Initiative will cut air pollution by "70 percent over 15 years." I urge the RNC to retract this false claim and apologize to citizens that it has misled. If we are to have a fair and honest debate, we must begin with accurate and complete information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Tom Allen
Member of Congress