

PROTECT CLEAN AIR, PROTECT OUR HEALTH

The Clean Air Act empowers states and the federal government through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with powerful tools to limit air pollution, including the pollution that causes climate change, from major sources like power plants and automobiles. The EPA works to ensure that we have clean air, water, and land by reducing environmental health risks. Clean Air Act safeguards have reduced pollution from major categories of pollutants 73% over the past 49 years, while the economy has more than tripled in size. But companies that cause pollution have mounted a campaign to strip the EPA's authority to limit carbon pollution. Here are talking points you can use to discuss why the EPA's authority to limit climate pollution must remain in the Clean Air Act:

1. **Americans agree that we have a moral responsibility to provide a safe and healthy climate for our children and families.** *We have a right to clean air and water*.*
2. **We all understand that burning oil, coal and gas is not healthy for us, or the nature around us.** *Burning fossil fuels creates pollution that harms our hearts and lungs, and also contributes to climate change.*
3. **More Americans are recognizing that climate change threatens our health.** *Increasing temperatures, poor air quality, wildfires, and more frequent and intense extreme weather events are threatening our health and wellbeing.*
4. **The EPA is responsible for reducing climate pollution and protecting human health.** *The Clean Air Act gives the EPA authority and responsibility to limit carbon pollution, methane and other greenhouse gases that harm our health and cause our climate to change.*
5. **The EPA authority to protect our health is under assault.** *The Climate Leadership Council's plan (also called the Baker-Schultz plan) is promoted as a climate solution because it puts a price on carbon, but it strips the EPA's authority to stop climate pollution under the guise of "regulatory simplification."*
6. **The Baker-Schultz plan calls for citizens, not polluters, to pay damage and cleanup costs of their pollution.** *It would remove legal liability for past emissions from the oil, coal, and gas polluters, which explains why Exxon, BP, and Shell strongly support this plan.*
7. **We can't trade away the EPA's ability to protect health.** *We don't need to strip EPA authority to provide clean air to put a price on carbon. They are complementary solutions.*
8. **We must oppose any plan that allows polluters to pollute even more or increase pollution on frontline communities.** *Without the health-protective tools in Clean Air Act, communities near power plants, highways and other sources of pollution could face an even greater burden of unhealthy air.*

- 9. Leading health and medical associations in America have joined together to support strong climate action.** *More than 100 health and medical organizations across the country have endorsed [The Call to Action on Climate, Health and Equity: A Policy Action Agenda](#) to protect the health and safety of all people.*
- 10. Each of us can make a difference, now.** *The American Lung Association provides information and resources so you can contact your elected representatives and community leaders and urge them to take climate action. For more information, go to <https://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/outdoor/climate-change/> and for more talking points and communications guidance, visit climateforhealth.org/resources.*

COUNTERPOINTS AND ANSWERS

Following are arguments that people might give on why you might support regulatory rollbacks, along with suggested responses.

- 1. “Limiting EPA’s authority is necessary to gain conservative support on these climate solutions.”**
Response: There is already bipartisan support on the need for climate solutions, and growing agreement on areas we can work together, like conserving energy, preserving nature, and expanding access to healthy renewable energy. Proposals like the Baker-Schultz plan go well beyond regulatory reform - they would permanently weaken the Clean Air Act and dramatically limit its ability to protect our health from climate change.
- 2. “Having both a carbon fee and EPA authority to act on climate change in place is bad for businesses.”**
Response: Climate change itself is bad for business, rife with inherent risks on business operations. The strong protections in the Clean Air Act can help the fee work effectively, and therefore these strategies are complementary. If the fee is working to reduce carbon emissions, EPA can take that into account as it implements the law. If the fee doesn’t work, the EPA can still ensure the nation meets the emissions reductions necessary to avoid the worst health impacts of climate change. We need every tool in the toolbox to address climate change.
- 3. “We need to work with the fossil fuel industry-not against them-to address climate change.”**
Response: The industry-backed Baker-Shultz proposal is an unacceptable trade-off. The proposal would permanently weaken the Clean Air Act and remove legal liability from the fossil fuel industry so that they never have to pay for their pollution. Either provision is bad for us. Americans should not have to pay for the pollution created by the fossil fuel industry – either with their money or their health. Americans agree that polluters need to pay.
- 4. “Ok, I won’t support the Baker-Shultz proposal. I’ll get behind the other climate solutions being proposed.”**
Response: That’s great to hear. Make sure to take a close look at any initiative before you support it, because we’re seeing a trend in attacks on the EPA. Several proposals include provisions to limit EPA’s ability to reduce carbon pollution from power plants. These provisions are dangerous and they’re the reason that leading health organizations oppose these initiatives.