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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

GOVERNORS OFFICE

SEP 07 2010

AUG 30 2010

PIERRE, SD

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable M. Michael Rounds
Governor of South Dakota
State Capitol
500 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Dear Governor Rounds:

Thank you for your letter of August 3, 2010, expressing concern over the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) ongoing review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for particulate matter (PM). I appreciate the importance of NAAQS decisions to agricultural communities and I respect your perspectives and opinions.

As you know, NAAQS are set to protect public health from outdoor air pollution, and are not focused on any specific category of sources or any particular activity (including activities related to agriculture). The NAAQS are based on consideration of the scientific evidence and technical information regarding health and welfare effects of the pollutants for which they are set.

We are early in the process of reviewing the PM NAAQS and are far from making any decisions on whether the PM standards should be changed. The next step is consideration of public comments and advice from the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee on a draft Policy Assessment (PA) prepared by EPA staff. The PA is not a decision document. Rather, it will inform my decision on whether, and if so how, to propose a revision of the NAAQS. There remains a significant amount of work to be done and a formal proposal and call for public review and comments would not be issued until early 2011. Following consideration of public comments on a proposal, the Agency would issue a notice of final rulemaking later in 2011.

We remain committed to common sense approaches to improving air quality across the country without placing undue burden on agricultural and rural communities. We will continue discussing these options with the Agency's science advisors and the public. This is all part of the open and transparent rulemaking process that provides Americans with many opportunities to offer their comments and thoughts. Your comments and those of your colleagues will be fully considered as we proceed with our deliberations.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further questions or concerns, please contact me or your staff may call Sarah Hospodor-Pallone, Deputy Associate Administrator for Intergovernmental Relations, at 202-564-7178.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Jackson', with a large loop at the beginning and a horizontal line at the end.

Lisa P. Jackson