

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

November 17, 2011

Lisa P. Jackson  
Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

We write with concerns about EPA Region Eight's proposed decision to issue a partial Federal Implementation Plan (FIP) to overrule North Dakota's State Implementation Plan (SIP). The state of North Dakota took into account all of the factors specified in the regional haze regulations and provided a reasoned explanation for its plan. EPA Region Eight should respect their decision and accept the North Dakota's SIP to address regional haze in their state.

In South Dakota, we rely heavily on coal-based generation to supplemental our hydro-electric generation. This coal-based generation has been key to our region's economic development in the past and is vital to help to maintain and grow our economy in the future. We have made great gains in reducing emissions from coal-based generation, while increasing the supply of electricity.

We strive for clean air in this nation, and North Dakota has clean air. In fact, North Dakota is one of eleven states that meet all the Clean Air Act National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Unfortunately, the difference in visibility improvements between the State's SIP and EPA FIP's are not even noticeable to the human eye. Additionally, we understand that the EPA's FIP proposal will cost hundreds of millions of dollars for additional technology that will be passed along to ratepayers in our State.

The Clean Air Act has worked successfully in the past; however, we are concerned that the increased cost of electricity due to EPA regional haze requirements will make limited improvements, but have such high additional costs. As a nation experiencing tough economic times, we must insist on cost-effective, common-sense solutions to potential environmental hazards. We therefore lend our support to the North Dakota SIP, which would improve the visibility in the Class I areas while still protecting the economic interests of their State and our nation.

Sincerely,

  
Tim Johnson  
United States Senate

  
John Thune  
United States Senate

  
Kristi Noem  
U.S. House of Representatives