



Cincinnati Joins Clean Air Cities Campaign

Membership to help Cincinnati support regulations for healthier air

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By Hannah McCartney

Cincinnati is the latest city to join the Clean Air Cities campaign, according to a press release from the Center for Biological Diversity, who spearheads the campaign. As a member, Cincinnati joins the likes of dozen other cities, including Seattle, Wash., Berkeley, Calif., Tucson, Ariz. and Cambridge, Mass.

Cincinnati City Council passed a resolution on Wednesday to join the campaign as part of council's "Green Cincinnati Plan," which has also initiated the use of SORTA's hybrid buses, the Cincinnati Energy Alliance, implementation of LEED-certified buildings and the Electric Car Parking Initiative.

The Clean Air Cities campaign is a nationwide effort to urge cities to be proactive in speaking to the Obama administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use the Clean Air Act to make worthwhile reductions in greenhouse gas pollution and slow global warming.

The Clean Air Act is a federal law passed in 1970 that's designed to make sure U.S. citizens are breathing safe air; it requires the U.S. EPA to set forth national air quality standards to protect against harmful pollutants like ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, lead and particulate soot. With the standards, state governments are responsible for developing plans to meet the health standards by a given deadline. The Act also sets nationwide standards for other sources of pollution, including vehicles and power plants. Recently, large-scale polluters have lobbied for Congress to amend the Clean Air Act to mandate less stringent regulations on global warming emissions, and legislation introduced in



the House and Senate frequently fight to prevent the EPA's efforts to achieve healthful levels of pollutants in our air.

"We are making great strides toward a 'greener' city with our Green Cincinnati Plan. To continue to work tirelessly for improved air quality, we must also send a strong message of full support for the Clean Air Act to the EPA," said Cincinnati City Council Member Laure Quinlivan in CBD's press release.

The EPA projected that in 2010 the Clean Air Act would save 23,000 lives and prevent 1.7 million asthma attacks and more than 68,000 emergency room visits and hospitalizations. According to the Center for Biological Diversity, the act created benefits valued at \$22.2 trillion in its first two decades; that's 42 times the amount invested in its regulations.

A 2011 report from Environment Ohio ranked Cincinnati the 16th smoggiest city in the United States, and a report commissioned by the Clean Air Task Force attributed 1,221 deaths in Ohio each year to pollution from coal plants.

