



Climate Change - Regulatory Initiatives

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Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act

Action

On December 7, 2009, the Administrator signed two distinct findings regarding greenhouse gases under section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act:

- **Endangerment Finding:** The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of the six key well-mixed greenhouse gases--carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆)--in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.
- **Cause or Contribute Finding:** The Administrator finds that the combined emissions of these well-mixed greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the greenhouse gas pollution which threatens public health and welfare.

These findings do not themselves impose any requirements on industry or other entities. However, this action is a prerequisite to finalizing the EPA's [proposed greenhouse gas emission standards for light-duty vehicles](#), which were jointly proposed by EPA and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Safety Administration on September 15, 2009.

Background

On April 2, 2007, in *Massachusetts v. EPA*, 549 U.S. 497 (2007), the Supreme Court found that greenhouse gases are air pollutants covered by the Clean Air Act. The Court held that the Administrator must determine whether or not emissions of greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles cause or contribute to air pollution which may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health or welfare, or whether the science is too uncertain to make a reasoned decision. In making these decisions, the Administrator is required to follow the language of section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. The Supreme Court decision resulted from a petition for rulemaking under section 202(a) filed by more than a dozen environmental, renewable energy, and other organizations.

On April 17, 2009, the Administrator signed proposed endangerment and cause or contribute

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 - Light Duty Vehicle Program (PDF) (1 p., 39 KB, [About PDF](#))
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findings for greenhouse gases under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. EPA held a 60-day public comment period, which ended June 23, 2009, and received over 380,000 public comments. These included both written comments as well as testimony at two public hearings in Arlington, Virginia and Seattle, Washington. EPA carefully reviewed, considered, and incorporated public comments and has now issued these final Findings.

Findings

These findings were signed by the Administrator on December 7, 2009, and will be published in the *Federal Register* (www.regulations.gov) under Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0171. A pre-publication version of these findings is below.

- [Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act](#) (284 pp., 377 KB, [About PDF](#))

Technical analyses developed in support of the Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act may be found here:

- [Technical Support Document for the Findings](#) (210 pp., 2.5 MB, [About PDF](#))

Response to Comments

EPA's response to public comments received on the Proposed Findings and accompanying Technical Support Document may be found here:

- [Volume 1: General Approach to the Science and Other Technical Issues \(PDF\)](#) (146 pp., 13.9 MB, [About PDF](#))
- [Volume 2: Validity of Observed and Measured Data \(PDF\)](#) (104 pp., 704 KB, [About PDF](#))
- [Volume 3: Attribution of Observed Climate Change \(PDF\)](#) (59 pp., 372 KB, [About PDF](#))
- [Volume 4: Validity of Future Projections \(PDF\)](#) (81 pp., 483 KB, [About PDF](#))
- [Volume 5: Human Health and Air Quality \(PDF\)](#) (95 pp., 704 KB, [About PDF](#))
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- [Volume 8: Other Sectors \(PDF\)](#) (25 pp., 95 KB, [About PDF](#))
- [Volume 9: Endangerment Finding \(PDF\)](#) (37 pp., 137 KB, [About PDF](#))
- [Volume 10: Cause or Contribute Finding \(PDF\)](#) (18 pp., 76 KB, [About PDF](#))
- [Volume 11: Miscellaneous Legal, Procedural, and Other Comments \(PDF\)](#) (40 pp., 167 KB, [About PDF](#))

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To access materials related to the proposed finding, please visit the [Proposed Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act](#) archive.

Contact Us

Contact us at ghgendangerment@epa.gov with questions about this action.

Disclaimer: The comment period for this action has ended; comments made during this time will not be entered into the docket.