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Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2008-0015

Environmental Protection Agency

Mail Code 6102T

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20460

Dear Sir/Madam:

On behalf of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA), thank you for this opportunity to comment on National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Carbon Monoxide; Proposed Rule (“Proposed Rule”), which was published in the *Federal Register* on February 11, 2011 (76 *Federal Register* 8158). NACAA is the national association of air pollution control agencies in 51 states and territories and over 165 metropolitan areas across the country.

The following comments address EPA’s proposed changes to the monitoring network for carbon monoxide (CO). Specifically, the agency is proposing to add a requirement for monitoring CO near roadways; as proposed, CO monitors would be co-located at a subset of near roadway monitoring stations required under the final revisions to the nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) monitoring network. The CO monitors would need to be established by January 1, 2013, following the implementation schedule of the NO₂ near roadway monitors.¹ Under the Proposed Rule, existing CO monitors would be relocated and placed along with near roadway NO₂ monitors in Core-Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) with a population of 1 million or more, resulting in 77 sites within 53 urban areas nationwide.

First, NACAA supports EPA’s proposal to co-locate CO near roadway monitors at a subset of NO₂ near roadway sites. This is consistent with the recommendations of EPA’s Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), which urged the agency to develop the near roadway monitoring network with a multipollutant focus and included CO in its list of pollutants that should be measured.¹ NACAA also encourages EPA to allow flexibility for state and local agencies to use alternative siting of near roadway CO monitors on a case by case

¹ See Primary National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Nitrogen Dioxide; Final Rule, 75 *Federal Register* 6474 (Feb. 9, 2010).

basis, where there is a scientific justification for siting the CO monitor in a different location from the NO₂ monitor, to ensure the best possible measurement of near roadway CO concentrations.

In order to provide for initial collection and analysis of data regarding near roadway CO exposure while allowing state and local agencies to focus their limited resources in the most sensitive areas, NACAA recommends that EPA raise the proposed threshold for CO near roadway monitoring and require CO measurements in CBSAs with a population of 2.5 million or more. The association estimates this would result in approximately 44 sites in 22 urban areas nationwide. NACAA also recommends that near roadway CO monitors be established by January 1, 2014, in order to provide adequate time for state and local agencies to shut down and relocate existing CO sites.

NACAA also encourages EPA to explore the use of “true trace” instruments, which are more effective at capturing the CO gradient in the near roadway atmosphere than older non-trace instruments. EPA should provide funding for new trace level instruments and phase out older instruments over time. Finally, traffic cameras should be provided at near roadways sites in order to discern the source of any short-term high concentrations.

Second, NACAA continues to stress that new monitoring requirements must be fully funded. This includes not only the costs of equipment, but also staff and operation and maintenance costs. Simply put, state and local agencies need additional, adequate federal funding in order to move forward with new monitoring requirements. Implementing a multipollutant near roadway monitoring network requires the purchase of new equipment and installation of new sites, relocation of monitors, and additional staff and operation and maintenance costs at a time when state and local agencies are already struggling with budget and staffing shortfalls.² New federal funding is desperately needed in order to implement these new requirements, and should be provided under Clean Air Act section 103, rather than section 105 which requires matching funds from already strapped state and local budgets.

It is also important to note that the relocation of existing CO monitors is not without additional costs to state and local agencies, as it requires the use of additional staff time and resources, which must be fully funded. In addition, some state and local agencies use CO for quality control or other purposes and need adequate time and resources to budget and purchase new instruments.

While co-locating near roadway CO monitors with NO₂ near roadway sites will help streamline the use of state and local resources, the near roadway network – including the initial NO₂ near roadway sites – must be fully supported by new federal funding in order to move forward. NACAA recommends that EPA work with state and local agencies to develop a method for prioritizing new monitoring equipment purchases and implementation over the next several years to ensure that state and local resources are maximized in the most efficient manner

² See NACAA Comments on EPA’s Proposed National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Nitrogen Dioxide (Sep. 14, 2009).

for the protection of public health and the environment. This should include a conversation about the best way to move forward with near roadway monitoring requirements. It may be necessary to develop a program for phasing in new monitoring sites and reevaluate network implementation.

For example, CASAC has recommended that the near roadway network be implemented in stages over a three year period. The committee noted that more time is needed to absorb lessons from EPA's current near roadway pilot study to ensure the best possible siting of the near roadway network, allowing the network to "evolve based on lessons learned from the Pilot Study as well as from the operation of the initial sites."³ The first round of sites could be used to gather information on appropriate siting in the near roadway environment, near roadway gradient, and spacial relationships.

EPA should also take this opportunity to reevaluate the existing CO monitoring network and eliminate sites that are redundant or no longer necessary so that resources can be transferred to higher priority areas. For example, state and local agencies should be able to divest CO maintenance sites in accordance with the provisions of 40 C.F.R. Part 58, Appendix D. EPA should provide clear guidance and support for divestment of these sites in order to ensure regional consistency and support. State and local agencies have often faced resistance from EPA – which can vary from region to region – when faced with divestment. Providing clear guidance and support for the divestment of unnecessary monitors is essential to allow state and local agencies to best focus limited resources, and is a necessary prerequisite to the relocation of existing CO monitors for inclusion in the near roadway network.

Finally, NACAA encourages EPA to work with state and local agencies to address a number of complicated implementation issues that are raised by the proposed CO near roadway network and nonattainment area designations. There is a need to think creatively about challenging aspects of the network, including the general issue of how to address nonattainment based on a near roadway monitor reading. The Clean Air Act requires states to address and reduce emissions in order to achieve attainment, and the focus of the emission control effort is within a nonattainment area, typically a CBSA or county.

In a near roadway, ultra-microscale environment, however, one issue that arises is what control measures – beyond federally required motor vehicle fleet standards that are beyond our control – are appropriate or effective for state and local agencies to take. Another issue, as explained by CASAC, is that "[d]ifferences in the microscale environments of different roadside monitors may result in one area being out of attainment even though the area actually has similar, and possibly lower, maximum NO₂ levels than other areas."⁴ EPA should consult with

³ See Letter to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson from Dr. Armistead Russell and Dr. Jonathan Samet, "Review of the 'Near-road Guidance Document – Outline' and 'Near-road Monitoring Pilot Study Objectives and Approach'" (Nov. 24, 2010).

⁴ See Letter to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson from Dr. Jonathan Samet, "Comments and Recommendations Concerning EPA's Proposed Rule for the Revision of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Nitrogen Dioxide" (Sep. 9, 2009).

NACAA on implementation issues that arise when relevant regulatory nonattainment requirements are triggered by near roadway monitors.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Proposed Rule. Please do not hesitate to contact either of us or Misti Duvall of NACAA if you have any questions or need further information.

Sincerely,



Dick Valentinetti
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Co-Chair
NACAA Monitoring Committee



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