



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Urging the Trump Administration to maintain Federal Mercury and Air Toxics Standards.

WHEREAS, Mercury is a highly potent neurotoxin that is most commonly dispersed into the air when burned by coal- and oil-fired power plants; and

WHEREAS, Once in the atmosphere, mercury can travel for extended periods of time before being deposited in water through precipitation, where microorganisms convert it into its most toxic form, methylmercury which can affect fetal and childhood neurological development, increase risk of heart attacks and diabetes, as well as weaken immune functioning; and

WHEREAS, The Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) were established in 2011 and were the first set of federal rules to limit hazardous chemicals, such as mercury, from coal-burning and oil-burning power plants; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, the EPA estimated that MATS would bring between \$37 billion and \$90 billion in annual benefits and cost about \$9.6 billion to the industry; and

WHEREAS, The Center for American Progress found that MATS reduced mercury emissions from power plants by 81 percent since going into effect; and

WHEREAS, According to EPA projections, MATS save over 17,000 lives per year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Since the implementation of MATS, seven of the highest-polluting states successfully reduced mercury emissions by more than 2,000 pounds; and

WHEREAS, On December 27, 2018, the EPA issued a proposed revised Supplemental Cost Finding for the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards; and

WHEREAS, In their 2018 assessment, the EPA found that costs for the MATS program would range from \$7.4 to \$9.6 billion annually and the benefits would range from \$4 to \$6 million annually. The EPA found the benefits to be significantly less than the billions of dollars of benefits that were estimated in 2011 because the 2018 report did not include health benefits of limiting toxic chemical pollution in addition to reducing the toxic chemicals themselves; and

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, its citizens and its environment will be well served by maintaining and strengthening the MATS; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby urge the Trump Administration to maintain Federal Mercury and Air Toxics Standards.