

## Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee

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September 23, 2013  
The Honorable Leta Mach, Chair  
Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E. Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Ms. Mach,

The summer of 2013 was the cleanest summer for regional air pollution in almost five years. There were no “Code Red” high-ozone smog days and only four “Code Orange” days. Likewise, levels of particulate matter (soot) were down with no exceedances and earlier this year the Council of Governments requested redesignation to “attainment” with EPA clean air particulate matter standards. Residents of our metropolitan area – especially the young, the old, and the infirm -- are truly breathing easier thanks to the efforts made and strides taken to clean-up unhealthy air pollution. Our local governments, in partnership with the federal government and area residents, have labored hard to achieve these results. We can all be thankful that our efforts are now beginning to bear fruit.

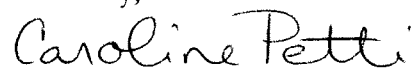
But, now is not the time to quit or rest on our laurels.

- Weather has a significant effect on air pollution and the summer of 2013 was an unusually cool and wet summer. There can be no doubt that this kept ozone smog levels down below normal in the region.
- Though 2013 was a good summer, the Washington metropolitan region continues to be non-compliant even with the existing public health standards for ozone.
- Based on new health science, EPA’s new ozone standards will require further emissions reductions across all sectors.
- Winds from upwind areas and air pollution sources in our own metropolitan area continue to bring ozone and ozone precursors into our region.
- Exposure to high levels of ozone air pollution continues to adversely affect the lives and health of regional residents.
- The health of the Chesapeake Bay – our region’s most important natural resource -- still suffers from environmental degradation, much of it due to air pollution deposition.

Clearly the actions taken today and in years past are beginning to show positive results. The air is getting cleaner. Our region is becoming healthier, more breatheable and, indeed, more livable. But, air pollution remains a daunting problem and we have a ways to go before we attain healthy air. New and existing pollution reduction programs must continue – for example, to further curb emissions from automobiles and power plants, encourage clean transportation alternatives, adopt tougher requirements for diesel generators, and continue and strengthen controls on consumer

products and fuels. While we applaud our efforts to date, let's continue to be vigilant and proactive in our work to improve air quality in our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caroline Petti". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop on the 'C' and a long tail on the 'i'.

Caroline Petti, Chair