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>>>**NEWS RELEASE**<<<

**BUSH POWER PLANT POLICY FAILS TO LIMIT  
DIRTY AIR AND DISEASE;  
LEAVES STATES BEHIND, SAYS NEW STUDY**  
*Facility-Specific Health Impacts Available for the First Time*

**Washington, DC** – The Bush Administration’s rollback of the New Source Review (NSR) provision of the Clean Air Act (CAA), expected to be announced this week, will allow the country’s dirtiest and most deadly power plants to put off real cleanup for more than a decade. By removing the NSR safeguard and relying solely on the cap & trade proposal known as Clear Skies, many states will see no reduction in sulfur dioxide emissions for years, according to a new report released today by Eric V. Schaeffer, former head of civil enforcement for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and current Director of the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP). EIP commissioned the study to Abt Associates, a consulting firm that EPA has hired as a technical consultant.

The report demonstrates how even though Title IV of the Clean Air Act (the so-called “acid rain” provisions) has reduced sulfur dioxide emissions through a cap & trade program, the progress is unevenly distributed. For instance, from 1990 to 2001, sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions decreased about 5 million tons nationwide, but emissions in 16 states actually increased, and other states hardly improved at all. Companies are meeting their Title IV obligations by purchasing emission “credits” from plants that have cleaned up, rather than cleaning up their own emissions.

“The air in many states is either getting dirtier or barely improving and many of the dirtiest plants are actually increasing emissions. Trading programs might have impressive national results, but these states are getting left behind,” says Schaeffer. “The good news is that sulfur dioxide emissions from power plants have declined about one third; the bad news is that some communities are not improving because their local power plant can put off cleanup by buying pollution credits.”

The study also provides death toll statistics for the 41 dirtiest coal-fired power plants in the country. For example, the Homer City in Pennsylvania emitted over 32,000 more tons of SO<sub>2</sub> in 2001 than 1990, which is tied to 269 to 310 premature deaths, 2,414 asthma attacks and 20,924 work loss days in 2001. For the first time, facility-specific disease and premature death estimates are available for each of these plants based on actual emissions from 2001.

Extensive studies by the Harvard School of Public Health and the American Cancer Society clearly demonstrate the link between fine particle pollution and heart disease, lung cancer and premature death. SO<sub>2</sub> and nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) react with ammonia to form fine particles, which interfere with the ability of the lungs to absorb oxygen. Power plants are responsible for two-thirds of the SO<sub>2</sub> and one quarter of the NO<sub>x</sub> emitted annually in the United States.

The Bush Administration has proposed another trading program that delays many reductions for more than 20 years. If EPA wants to continue market trading, North Carolina offers a more effective program by setting an aggressive schedule for reducing SOX and NOX emissions than the so-called Clear Skies proposal. North Carolina requires a 75% cut in overall SO2 and NOx emission by 2013, while Clear Skies takes twice as long to get the same benefits. Electricity rates for consumers are not expected to rise from this new legislation and, in a separate contract with power companies, the state arranged to retire the emission credits that might otherwise have been sold to power plants outside North Carolina's borders.

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