

Dear Dr. Nance,

We, the undersigned community members, write to you today concerning clean air in and around Texas national parks. From Big Bend to the Guadalupe Mountains, Texas is home to beautiful vistas and incredible natural areas, where people recreate and thrive outdoors.

Unfortunately, pollution from Texas' dirtiest and oldest coal plants threatens these wide open spaces that so many of us enjoy. Power plants like W.A. Parish and Martin Lake, which should be regulated under the Clean Air Act, have been allowed to continue polluting, unabated, for over a decade. Emissions from these coal plants contributes to haze pollution in Texas national parks and causes a number of health issues for communities surrounding the plants.

The W.A. Parish coal plant, for example, is responsible for over [170 premature deaths](#) each year. Due to outdated pollution controls at the plant, Parish [released](#) over 7.8 million pounds of nitrogen oxide emissions and 67 million pounds of sulfur dioxide emissions in 2021 alone. To the community surrounding the plant, these emissions are unacceptable. Every day, people living in surrounding neighborhoods, including the high school students who receive education next door, are exposed to toxic air pollutants which contribute to asthma, lung disease, heart issues, and so much more.

Moreover, the area around W.A. Parish is home to thousands of residents in environmental justice communities. Historically, these populations have been more deeply impacted by environmental hazards to public health, such as exposure to air pollutants from industrial facilities like W.A. Parish. In [EO 14008](#), Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, the Administration stated their commitment to "delivering environmental justice in communities all across America." Cleaning up W.A. Parish is an opportunity for EPA to live up to this commitment.

W.A. Parish is only the tip of the iceberg, though. A [2017 study](#) from a Professor of Environmental Medicine at New York University found that Texas could avert \$6.7 billion in health-related expenses by requiring updated pollution controls at Parish and 14 other power plants across the state. Right now, EPA has a critical opportunity to do just that. The agency can deliver cleaner air and clear views in our public lands for years to come, but it must act swiftly, boldly, and decisively in 2023.

With Texas' regional haze plan already submitted to the EPA, the clock is ticking for the agency to approve or deny it. We hope that you share our understanding that Texas' regional haze plan is vastly inadequate. Through decisive action, EPA can and must hold Texas accountable to require pollution reductions that cut haze emissions from damaging coal-fired power plants across the state. The same pollution that causes hazy skies also harms people's health who live closest to those polluting facilities and exercise or recreate outdoors.

We call on the EPA to safeguard the people of Texas by taking action on the state haze plan that will reduce the emissions from polluting facilities that harm public lands and Texas

residents. More specifically, we urge EPA to issue a federal plan that requires the 15 worst polluting power plants to install scrubbers for sulfur dioxide control, and selective catalytic reduction for nitrogen oxide control. Given the combination of environmental, economic and public welfare interests at stake, we trust the agency will act in our collective best interests.

Sincerely,

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