



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION III  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

FEB 06 2013

The Honorable Earl Ray Tomblin  
Governor of West Virginia  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Governor Tomblin:

Thank you for your staff's recommendations on air quality designations for the State of West Virginia for the 2010 revision to the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard for sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). Reducing levels of sulfur dioxide pollution is an important part of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) commitment to a clean, healthy environment. Exposure to SO<sub>2</sub> can cause a range of adverse health effects, including narrowing of the airways which can cause difficulty breathing and increased asthma symptoms. This letter is to notify you of EPA's preliminary intentions regarding your recommended designations.

On June 3, 2010, EPA strengthened the health-based or "primary" standard for SO<sub>2</sub> by establishing a standard for 1-hour average SO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at a level of 75 parts per billion. The Clean Air Act requires EPA to complete the initial designations process within two years of promulgating a new or revised standard. If EPA has insufficient information to make these designations, the Agency has the authority to extend the designation process by up to one year. On July 27, 2012, EPA announced that it had insufficient information to complete the designations for the 1-hour SO<sub>2</sub> standard within two years and extended the designations deadline to June 3, 2013.

At this time, EPA is proceeding with designating nonattainment areas in locations where existing monitoring data from 2009-2011 indicate violations of the 1-hour SO<sub>2</sub> standard. EPA intends to address the designations for all other areas in separate future actions. With input from a diverse group of stakeholders, EPA has developed a comprehensive implementation strategy for these future actions that focuses resources on identifying and addressing unhealthy levels of SO<sub>2</sub>. The strategy is available at [www.epa.gov/airquality/sulfurdioxide/implement.html](http://www.epa.gov/airquality/sulfurdioxide/implement.html). EPA will continue to work closely with you and our other state, tribal and local partners to ensure health-protective, commonsense implementation of the 1-hour SO<sub>2</sub> standard.

Consistent with the Clean Air Act, after carefully considering West Virginia's recommendations and all of the associated technical information for the 2010 SO<sub>2</sub> standard, including the most recent air quality data, EPA intends to designate as nonattainment the following areas, including the following counties or portions (p) of counties:

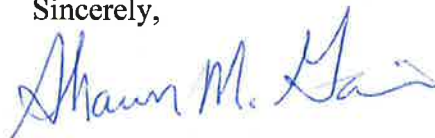
<u>Nonattainment Area</u>	<u>County(ies)</u>
Steubenville, OH-WV*	Brooke; Jefferson, OH (p)
Wheeling, WV-OH*	Marshall; Belmont, OH (p)

The asterisk (\*) represents a modification to the boundary that you have recommended. Modifications were made to include neighboring counties or portions of neighboring counties with sources that likely contribute to the monitored violations, resulting in an expansion of your state's recommended nonattainment area. The enclosed Technical Support Document provides a detailed analysis that supports our preliminary nonattainment area decisions.

EPA will continue to work with state officials regarding appropriate boundaries for the Steubenville and Wheeling nonattainment areas in West Virginia. If West Virginia has additional information that EPA should consider prior to finalizing these designations, please submit it to us by April 8, 2013. We also will be publishing a notice in the Federal Register announcing a 30-day period for the public to provide input on EPA's preliminary designation decisions regarding the areas that we would designate as nonattainment based on monitoring data. EPA intends to promulgate these designations for areas with monitored violations of the 2010 SO<sub>2</sub> standard by June 2013. We are not yet prepared to propose designations action or seek public comment on other areas.

EPA looks forward to a continued dialogue with you and your staff as we work together to implement the 2010 primary SO<sub>2</sub> standard. For additional information regarding initial designations on the SO<sub>2</sub> standard, please visit our website at [www.epa.gov/so2designations](http://www.epa.gov/so2designations). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or have your staff contact Mr. Mark Ferrell, EPA's West Virginia Liaison, at (304) 542-0231.

Sincerely,



Shawn M. Garvin  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Randy Huffman, Secretary  
West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection