



Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act

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Action

On December 7, 2009, the Administrator signed two distinct findings regarding greenhouse gases under section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act:

- **Endangerment Finding:** The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of the six key well-mixed greenhouse gases—carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆)—in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.
- **Cause or Contribute Finding:** The Administrator finds that the combined emissions of these well-mixed greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the greenhouse gas pollution which threatens public health and welfare.

These findings do not themselves impose any requirements on industry or other entities. However, this action was a prerequisite for implementing greenhouse gas emissions standards for vehicles. In collaboration with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, EPA finalized emission standards for light-duty vehicles (2012-2016 model years) in May of 2010 and heavy-duty vehicles (2014-2018 model years) in August of 2011.

Findings

These findings were signed by the Administrator on December 7, 2009. On December 15, 2009, the final findings were published in the *Federal Register* (www.regulations.gov) under Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0171. The final rule was effective January 14, 2010.

- [Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act](#)

Scientific and technical information summarized to support the Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act can be found here:

- [Technical Support Document for the Findings](#)

Response to Comments

EPA's response to public comments received on the Proposed Findings and accompanying Technical Support Document may be found [here](#).

Resources

- [Press Release](#)
- [Press Kit](#)
 - [Legal Basis \(Trasfondo legal\)](#)
 - [Health Effects \(Efectos a la salud\)](#)
 - [Environmental and Welfare Effects \(Efectos medioambientales\)](#)
 - [Climate Change Facts \(Datos sobre el cambio climatico\)](#)
 - [Light Duty Vehicle Program](#)

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Denial of Petitions for Reconsideration

EPA denied [ten Petitions for Reconsideration of the Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings](#) on July 29, 2010.

Background

On April 2, 2007, in *Massachusetts v. EPA*, 549 U.S. 497 (2007), the Supreme Court found that greenhouse gases are air pollutants covered by the Clean Air Act. The Court held that the Administrator must determine whether or not emissions of greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles cause or contribute to air pollution which may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health or welfare, or whether the science is too uncertain to make a reasoned decision. In making these decisions, the Administrator is required to follow the language of section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. The Supreme Court decision resulted from a petition for rulemaking under section 202(a) filed by more than a dozen environmental, renewable energy, and other organizations.

On April 17, 2009, the Administrator signed proposed endangerment and cause or contribute findings for greenhouse gases under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. EPA held a 60-day public comment period, which ended June 23, 2009, and received over 380,000 public comments. These included both written comments as well as testimony at two public hearings in Arlington, Virginia and Seattle, Washington. EPA carefully reviewed, considered, and incorporated public comments and has now issued these final Findings.

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