



# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & POLICY NEWSLETTER

## EJ Forum Members Meet with Former EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Cecilia Martinez, Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, Mr. Bryan Parras, Mr. Bill Gallegos, Ms. Donele Wilkins, Mr. Cecil D. Corbin-Mark, Mr. Jose Bravo, Dr. Nicky Sheats, former EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson

On January 23, 2013 members of the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change met with former EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson and her former Assistant Administrators at EPA Headquarters in Washington, DC. The Forum members had the opportunity to discuss how environmental justice will remain a priority post Administrator Jackson's departure. The meeting discussed topics such as the results of an EPA symposium held several years ago, an update on efforts to address an urban air toxics program, the consumer goods movement in ports, and climate change issues.

### WE ACT for Environmental Justice Staff

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## Environmental Justice Leadership Forum Weighs In

Members of the EJ Forum have made important contributions and effort towards providing a voice in Congressional discussions as well as Administrative actions. Below is a quick summary of these efforts.

**December:** Forum members sent a letter to the Office of Budget and Management and members of the Senate and House Appropriations committees regarding the Fiscal crisis and its potential impacts on EJ communities.

**January:** Letter to President Obama, his top advisors and Senate Environment & Public Works committee regarding the Administration's commitment to environmental justice and the characteristics needed in the next EPA Administrator to properly continue the legacy of former EPA Administrator Jackson.

**February:** Letter to the Bicameral Committee on Climate Change, outlining the Forum's ideas on how to tackle mitigation, adaptation through Congress and the Administration.

We supported sign-on letter with Earthjustice to demand that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalize the Definition of Solid Waste Rule (DSW). Recognizing that the deregulation of hazardous waste recycling poses serious health and environmental risks affecting EJ communities.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that under Executive Order 13514, **Federal agencies are required to develop, implement, and annually update a Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan** that describes how they will achieve the environmental, economic, and energy goals mandated in the Executive Order. This year, agencies are required to develop a climate change adaptation plan. On February 7th, 2013, agencies released their third annual Sustainability Plans. The public can comment on these plans up until April 2013 (deadlines depend on agency). The chart below specifies the agency, the link to the plan and the deadline, if specified. The forum will provide comments on each of these plans. See this link for more details: <http://sustainability.performance.gov/>

Federal Agency	Link to sustainability and climate change adaptation plans	Comment Deadline
Agriculture	<a href="http://www.dm.usda.gov/emd/sspp.htm">http://www.dm.usda.gov/emd/sspp.htm</a>	no date specified
Education	<a href="http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/strat/sustainability/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/strat/sustainability/index.html</a>	no date specified
Energy	<a href="http://www1.eere.energy.gov/sustainability/plans_reports.html#climate_change">http://www1.eere.energy.gov/sustainability/plans_reports.html#climate_change</a>	4/7/13
Environmental Protection Agency	<a href="http://epa.gov/climatechange/impacts-adaptation/fed-programs.html">http://epa.gov/climatechange/impacts-adaptation/fed-programs.html</a>	4/9/2013, 11:59 PM
Health and Human Services	<a href="http://www.hhs.gov/about/sustainability/index.html">http://www.hhs.gov/about/sustainability/index.html</a>	no date specified
Homeland Security	<a href="http://www.dhs.gov/publication/sustainability-performance-plan">http://www.dhs.gov/publication/sustainability-performance-plan</a>	no date specified
Housing and Urban Development	<a href="http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/sustainabilityplan">http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/sustainabilityplan</a>	no date specified
Interior	<a href="http://www.doi.gov/greening/sustainability_plan/index.cfm">http://www.doi.gov/greening/sustainability_plan/index.cfm</a>	4/12/13
Justice	<a href="http://www.justice.gov/jmd/services-initiatives.html">http://www.justice.gov/jmd/services-initiatives.html</a>	no date specified
Labor	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/open/sustainability/">http://www.dol.gov/open/sustainability/</a>	no date specified
NASA	<a href="http://www.nasa.gov/agency/sustainability/">http://www.nasa.gov/agency/sustainability/</a>	no date specified
State	<a href="http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/203934.pdf">http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/203934.pdf</a>	no date specified
Transportation	<a href="http://www.dot.gov/mission/sustainability/our-sustainability-efforts">http://www.dot.gov/mission/sustainability/our-sustainability-efforts</a>	April 10, 2013 by midnight
US Army Corps of Engineers	<a href="http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Sustainability">http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Sustainability</a>	no date specified

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION (FYI): New Reports and Resources from the Field

### Extreme Weather, Climate, and Health: Putting Science into Practice

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), in coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Public Health Association (APHA), National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), and Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), brought together NIH and CDC academic, state and city grantees working on Climate Change and Health projects presented their latest findings and discuss strategies for linking science to practice: “Extreme Weather, Climate, and Health: Putting Science into Practice” meeting held on January 30-31, 2013 in Washington, DC.

WE ACT’s Federal Policy Analyst presented to the group of stakeholders on the community perspective on addressing climate change, and how to better work with environmental justice leaders and the broader community. The presentation was titled, *“Building resilience from within: the intersection of research, practice and partnerships in a changing climate”*.

Most of the presentations are available online, along with the meeting book, on the website:  
<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/about/visiting/events/pastmtg/2013/dert-climate/index.cfm>.



### Healthy Schools Campaign Report

Leaders of the national Coalition for Healthier Schools presented a new national report on February 5, *Towards Healthy Schools 2015*, to the Obama Administration and Congress. The report provides a state-by-state analysis that says “all school children should be considered at elevated risk of health and learning difficulties due solely to the unexamined and or unaddressed risks in their schools and the lack of public health services for children....” Also released was a letter to Congress signed by more than 75 organizations calling for funding US EPA’s children’s health and schools-related voluntary programs. Members of the coalition and WE ACT’s Federal Policy Analyst met with the staff of Senator Gillibrand (D-NY), Senator Whitehouse (D-RI), Senator Boxer’s (D - CA) staff and US EPA’s Acting Administrator, Bob Perciasepe at EPA Headquarters. The risks of toxics, unacceptable school conditions and the disproportionate burden on environmental justice communities was also discussed.



Coalition for Healthier Schools members thank EPA and present “Towards Healthy Schools 2015” report, February 5, 2013. Pictured left to right: Jeff Jones, Healthy Schools Network- NYS Policy Advisor; Jay Snyder, Association of School Business Officials – International; Dr. Jalonne White-Newsome, West Harlem Environmental Action/DC; Bob Perciasepe, US EPA Deputy Administrator; Claire Barnett, Coordinator, Coalition for Healthier Schools; Jackie Mosby, Acting Director, US EPA Office of Children’s Health Protection; Veronika Carella, Maryland Commission on Children’s Environmental Health; Joyce Martin, Coalition for Healthier Schools’ Children’s Health Policy Adviser.

# Members of the EJ Community Support EPA Nominee Gina McCarthy



With the recent departure of former EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson, Assistant Administrator Gina McCarthy has been nominated by President Obama to assume the helm of the Agency. While the nomination and hearing period is anticipated to be lengthy and challenging due to the anti-environmental signals from Congress, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, along with 6 other EJ organizations, supports this nomination and will be showing our support,

publicly, through letters and other actions to the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, and Congress, as a whole, when it is time for the final vote. WE ACT and some of the broader forum members have had several opportunities to meet with Ms. McCarthy, as well as members of EPA's core leadership team to voice our concerns about clean air and other related regulatory concerns. In each of the conversations, McCarthy has been upfront, honest and direct in the progress or the challenges she has faced.

In the Office of Air and Radiation, her team successfully put forward the most stringent standards on Soot (or PM 2.5). While most of her work with the Agency has been around air quality, we are sure that her prior environmental work in Connecticut and Massachusetts will serve her well as she works to address air, waste, and water issues – which are critical for the well-being environmental justice communities. Based on Ms. McCarthy's professional environmental experience and her most recent verbal commitment at the recent US EPA's Clean Air Act Advisory Committee meeting a week ago, 'environmental justice will remain a priority for this Administration'— and we believe her.

Look forward to "Take Actions" on the WE ACT website in the upcoming months to support Gina McCarthy's nomination.

**WE ACT for Environmental Justice- New York and Washington, DC** and our partners at the following organizations endorse her nomination.

- ◆ **Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment- California**
- ◆ **Communities for a Better Environment- California**
- ◆ **Community Coalition for Environmental Justice- Washington**
- ◆ **Environmental Health Coalition- California**
- ◆ **Los Jardines Institute (The Gardens Institute)- New Mexico**
- ◆ **UPROSE- New York**

### Climate Protection Act of 2013

Sen. Ben Sanders (VT) and Sen. Barbara Boxer (CA) introduced legislation in mid-February called the *Climate Protection Act of 2013*. Under this act, the Senators propose several measures to reduce green house gas emissions, and increase investments in energy efficiency and clean energy. While the overall legislation needs a more robust environmental justice review, certain elements of the proposed legislation do attempt to address some of the concerns of communities of color, and/or low income including the following: carbon pricing, protecting communities from fracking, energy efficiency measures (weatherization) and providing energy rebates for customers based on generated revenue. Members of the Forum have already met with Environment and Public Works Committee staff and will be providing our review of the legislation, and continue our engagement throughout the entire bill process, from introduction, mark-up and seeking bill sponsorship.

### Clean Air Rules in Motion: Urban air toxics, Cleaner vehicles & Ozone



Required by Congress since 1990, the **urban air toxics report** provides an overview of how the levels of hazardous air pollutants— those pollutants that are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects— have changed in our nation's urban areas. Currently, this report is undergoing interagency review before being released to the public for review and comment. Examples of toxic air pollutants include benzene, which is found in gasoline; perchloroethylene, which is emitted from some dry cleaning facilities; and methylene chloride, which is used as a solvent and paint stripper by a number of industries. Examples of other listed air toxics include dioxin, asbestos, toluene, and metals such as cadmium, mercury, chromium, and lead compounds. The report is long overdue. The Forum will be providing a thorough review and comment for this document. Please review the following website that houses the last report from 2000: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/urban/strategyfs0303.pdf>.

**EPA's Cleaner Gasoline and Vehicles standard (otherwise known as Tier III)** is looked at as a cost-effective public health protection that would significantly reduce pollution from our transportation sector, by requiring low-sulfur fuel use and ultimately reduced harmful emissions from motor vehicles and ozone in our air. This rule is currently under review at the Office of Budget and Management, which is the last process before it is out for public review. This rule is very important for EJ communities, and quite possibly, will fill in the gaps of much needed roadway monitoring. The hope is that the rule will be out in the March timeframe. Until then, we will be launching a mini-campaign to support the movement on this rule. Please see this website for further information: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/opei/rulegate.nsf/byRIN/2060-AQ86>

**Ozone:** The new designations for the ozone standards are still under review. The EPA is required to conduct a couple of technical assessments for public review— an integrated science assessment and risk assessment that should be out for comment in May or June. We will be working to support the EPA and move forward with these rules, and finalization in December.

Please click on the following link for more information: <http://www.epa.gov/glo/actions.html>



## Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change

The Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change (EJLFCC) was formally organized in 2008 with the goals of *mobilizing and facilitating a national working group of environmental justice advocates who will interact with identified scientists/academics and representatives of mainstream environmental groups to catalyze and inform state and federal, political and legislative action that will result in the development of just policies and mechanisms that equitably reduce carbon emissions in all communities.*

Since its inception, EJLFCC has organized a major conference on climate justice, provided key position papers and education on supporting a carbon tax and engaged in a conversation with federal agency representatives around integrating adaptation, with a specific focus on EJ communities, into their policies and procedures. As the policy world changes, it is our hope that climate change legislation is on the horizon. Until then, the 37 member organizations of the EJLFCC will continue to engage in related policy challenges that have a direct impact on climate change and the health of our communities—such as federal clean air rules related to particulate matter and ozone, the National Climate Assessment and urban air toxics.

Please contact the DC office if you know of organizations working on environmental justice issues and that might be interested in joining in on the work of the EJLFCC. We want to expand our reach and have the opportunity to elevate issues that can be moved forward at a national level.

EJ Forum Website: <http://www.ejleadershipforum.org>

**For more information, please contact:**

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**States where there are currently no EJLFCC members**

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| Oregon       | Iowa           |
| Idaho        | Indiana        |
| Nevada       | Ohio           |
| Wyoming      | Tennessee      |
| Montana      | Mississippi    |
| North Dakota | Arkansas       |
| South Dakota | Virginia*      |
| Nebraska     | South Carolina |
| Kansas       | Florida        |
| Colorado     | Connecticut    |
| Arizona      | Massachusetts  |
| Oklahoma     | Maine          |
| Kansas       | Vermont        |
| Wisconsin    | New Hampshire  |

*\*Potential member in process*



**WE ACT's mission** is to build healthy communities by assuring that people of color and/or low-income participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices.



Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change

# Moving Environmental Justice Forward: Assessing Cumulative Impacts and Developing Policy Frameworks

**Save the Date!**

April 11-13, 2013 — Washington, D.C.

The goals of this meeting are to convene EJ advocates, public health professionals, and regional collaborators, to review and discuss cutting-edge assessment tools used to shape local policies, and to develop national policy and campaign frameworks that will result in just policies for all.

Topics to be discussed include:

- Cumulative Impacts, Clean Air & Health
- Climate Change
  - ◊ Mitigation & Carbon Pricing
  - ◊ Adaptation
  - ◊ Hydraulic fracturing
  - ◊ Potential Policy Solutions
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



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