

**An Open Letter, to  
Verizon - Microsoft - Deloitte - PriceWaterhouseCoopers**

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Sierra Club and our 2.4 million members and supporters to express our concerns about your company's relationship with, and [leadership within](#), the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). We believe this involvement deserves the urgent attention of your Board and management, as you have senior executives on NAM's Board of Directors.

Right now, dangerous smog pollution isn't just making the views in so many American communities unsightly, it's making too many of our nation's most vulnerable people sick. According to the American Lung Association (ALA), inhaling smog pollution is like getting a sunburn on your lungs and often results in immediate breathing trouble. Short-term exposure can trigger asthma attacks and long term exposure is linked to chronic respiratory diseases like asthma, reproductive and developmental harm, and even premature death.

Smog pollution robs hundreds of thousands of Americans with asthma and other respiratory ailments of quality of life. It sends thousands of children to emergency rooms each year and costs Americans' billions in health care costs, lost productivity, and premature deaths. It's especially bad for communities of color, as 7 in 10 African-Americans live in areas with unsafe air and African-American children are three times more likely to be admitted to the hospital for asthma than other children. But, there is a way to alleviate some of this pain. Right now, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Obama Administration are considering strengthening the national smog pollution standard to a level that would respect what the best scientific research says we must achieve to protect the health of our kids. The smog pollution standard, which is set and enforced by the EPA as the federal benchmark for clean air, was last updated in 2008. That year, the Bush administration rejected the recommendations of expert scientists and medical health professionals who warned that the now current 75 parts per billion (ppb) standard was insufficient to protect public health.

Numerous medical associations and public health organizations have endorsed 60 ppb as the standard for smog pollution that is consistent with protecting public health. If the EPA follows their advice, the new standard will go a long way to clean up the air. [According to the EPA](#), a 60 ppb standard would prevent roughly 1.8 million asthma attacks, 1.9 million missed school days, 7,900 premature deaths annually. In addition to its health benefits, a 60 ppb standard would provide the public with the most accurate measurement of air safety that medical science has to offer.

Today, the public largely shoulders the expense of the smog pollution caused by the fossil fuel industry, and a tighter standard would hold these industries accountable for their pollution. But that same industry is now fighting against a stronger standard, and is led by the National Association of Manufacturers -- an organization for which top executives from your company sit in leadership positions.

NAM has taken [a leading role](#) in opposing new protections from the Environmental Protection Agency against smog pollution. These safeguards are designed to protect the lives and health of children, families and the most vulnerable. By leading the chorus against these protections with [multi-million dollar advertising](#) and [lobbying](#) campaigns, NAM is directly opposing the recommendations of scientists and expert [medical organizations](#). That includes the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Heart Association, American Medical Association, and the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, who have all advocated a standard no higher than 60 parts per billion.

All this is bad, but what is even more concerning to us is that your company is represented on NAM's Board of Directors. We can hardly imagine that these are actions you support, as they are certainly at odds with the standards of contemporary corporate social responsibility. Still, your leadership role and relationship with the National Association of Manufacturers gives these positions more weight than they deserve. That is why we are bringing this matter to your attention at this time, as we urge you to terminate your relationship with this controversial organization that is directly standing in the way of safeguards that would protect the health of millions of Americans.

We look forward to your response to this request.

Sincerely

**Michael Brune,**  
*Executive Director*  
**Sierra Club**