

Congressman Kevin McCarthy today announced the introduction of H.R. 1582, legislation to ensure that the Central Valley can continue efforts to clean its air in a commonsense way that encourages job creation and economic growth. The Commonsense Ozone Regulation Act repeals a \$29 million fine being levied on the residents of the Central Valley for violation of an air quality standard that has been revoked by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It also postpones the implementation of new, stricter ozone standards until a Local Advisory Committee can study compliance feasibility. The bill is cosponsored by Congressman Devin Nunes (CA-21), Congressman Jeff Denham (CA-19) and Congressman Darrell Issa (CA-49).

"Right now, EPA is fining Valley residents for an air standard it already revoked, and now, is set to impose new standards that will result in a de facto ban on new businesses in the Valley. My bill allows Central Valley residents to inject commonsense into one-size-fits-all Washington regulations that destroy jobs and penalize our communities for circumstances beyond our control," said Congressman McCarthy. *"Central Valley residents and businesses are making great strides toward cleaning the air, but with unemployment in the Central Valley in double-digits, we need to take a commonsense approach that also encourages economic growth. That's exactly what The Commonsense Ozone Regulation Act does."*

Currently, residents in the Central Valley are being charged a \$29 million fine for an ozone standard that EPA revoked in 2005. This old 1-Hour Ozone Standard was replaced with the current 8-Hour Ozone Standard, which the Central Valley is working to comply with while still paying the fine for the 1-hour standard. Now, EPA is moving the goalposts and proposing a new, tighter 8-Hour Ozone Standard, which, according to local air regulators, would be nearly impossible for the Valley to meet.

"Once again, extreme environmental regulations are impeding economic growth in the Central Valley," said Representative Denham. *"With families and farmers in the 19th district suffering from unemployment levels just below 20%, now is not the time to impose new regulations which will destroy chances for new job creation in the Valley. This bill includes common sense solutions that allow the Valley to continue on a path towards cleaner air while also allowing businesses to grow and drive our economic recovery."* □

Neither the 1-Hour Ozone Standard or the proposed new 8-Hour Ozone Standard take into account the Central Valley's topography, weather, natural ozone background levels, foreign sources of pollution and traffic passing through the region, which create an environment ripe for ozone formation. Central Valley residents have no control over these things, but are being held

to account for them by the EPA. H.R. 1582 would ensure these local factors are taken into account with the creation of the local advisory committee.

"The EPA needs a reality check. We have grave economic conditions throughout the Central Valley and the federal government is about to make them worse," said Representative Nunes. *"It makes no sense that the agency would fine our communities under a standard which has been replaced, while at the same time moving the goal posts to make compliance with the new standard more difficult. This bill is needed to allow air quality improvements to continue without killing jobs."*

"The EPA intends to make standards harsher, making it increasingly hard for job creators to comply with these new and constantly changing regulations," said Representative Issa. *"This bill gives local districts a chance to meet requirements in a way that works for their community without unnecessary damage to the local economy."*

H.R. 1582 takes a commonsense two-fold approach to protect the Central Valley economy and continue to clean up the air. Specifically, the legislation:

- Repeals the \$29 million fine that is being levied on the Central Valley; and
- Creates a Local Advisory Committee to study the feasibility of complying with new EPA ozone standards.
 - The Local Advisory Committee would be composed of a representative of the local agriculture industry, air pollution control board, energy industry, health care industry, manufacturing and processing industry, and transportation industry, as well as a local governments and environmental justice representative. The committee would have five years to study and report findings to Congress. Congress would then have six months to review the report and act. During this time, EPA would not be able to implement new 8-Hour Ozone Standards, but the Valley would still be subject to the current 8-Hour Ozone Standard.