



June 6, 2019

Dear Senator:

The undersigned public health and medical organizations urge you to support the International Climate Accountability Act. The bill would help ensure that the United States adheres to the science-based targets in the Paris Agreement and develops a plan to meet them, both essential steps to protecting public health from the impacts of climate change.

Climate change is a public health emergency. The science clearly shows that communities across the nation are experiencing the health impacts of climate change, including enhanced conditions for ozone and particulate air pollution, which cause asthma attacks, cardiovascular disease and premature death; increased instances of extreme heat, severe storms and other destabilizing weather patterns that disrupt people's access to essential healthcare; increased spread of vector-borne diseases; and longer and more intense allergy seasons. These threats are no longer hypothetical, and Americans across the country have experienced them firsthand.<sup>1</sup>

Every American's health is at risk due to climate change, but some populations are at greater risk, including infants, children, seniors, pregnant women, low-income communities, some communities of color, people with disabilities and many people with chronic diseases. Evidence and experience shows that these populations will disproportionately bear the health impacts of climate change without concerted action to both mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The science is also clear that limiting increase in global temperatures to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius is essential. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found dramatic differences in health impacts between 1.5 and 2 degrees, including in heat-related morbidity and mortality,

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Global Change Research Program. Fourth National Climate Assessment. 2018. <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>

ozone-related mortality, and vector-borne diseases.<sup>2</sup> The Paris Agreement's goals are to keep the world well under 2 degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to further stay below 1.5 degrees.

The International Climate Accountability Act is an important step toward what must become a comprehensive set of policies protect public health from the worst impacts of climate change. The nation urgently needs to implement strong, science-based measures to reduce the emissions that cause climate change. The U.S. must also invest in health adaptation strategies to help communities address the varied health impacts they are already facing.

On behalf of the patients and communities we serve, we urge you to vote YES on the International Climate Accountability Act.

Sincerely,

Allergy & Asthma Network  
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Lung Association  
American Public Health Association  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Children's Environmental Health Network  
Climate for Health  
Health Care Climate Council  
Health Care Without Harm  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Environmental Health Association  
National Medical Association  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Public Health Institute

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<sup>2</sup> IPCC, 2018: Summary for Policymakers. In: Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, H.-O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J.B.R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M.I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, and T. Waterfield (eds.)]. World Meteorological Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, 32 pp.