

# STATE OF COLORADO

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor

May 14, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell:

Thank you for your letter on March 19th. Out of respect for the office you hold, a thoughtful response follows.

Coloradans have a unique appreciation for what is at stake in our natural environment -- we are surrounded by some of the most beautiful scenery found anywhere in the world. In Colorado, we have a long-standing history of investing in our natural environment, with the engagement of local business and civic leaders. We have made immense strides in eliminating the "brown cloud" for which Denver and the front range of the Rockies were once famous; stunning, clear views of the Rocky Mountains have been restored to our residents and the tens of millions of visitors who come here annually.

We are also leaders in finding agreement with impacted industries on how best to improve our natural environment. Last year, we stood shoulder to shoulder with executives from our three largest oil and gas producers and leaders from local and national environmental organizations, including the Environmental Defense Fund, collaborating to establish the first-in-the-nation regulation of methane emissions from oil and gas facilities. This collaborative effort will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but will simultaneously improve local air quality.

Colorado is already a leader in reducing carbon emissions from power plants, on track to hit an estimated 20% reduction over 2012 emissions -- and we have done this all while keeping energy rates affordable. We will continue to engage with our industry to develop a compliant Clean Power Plan, as required by federal law.

In adopting the Clean Air Act, under which these regulations are being developed, Congress vested the states with power to develop their own plans. Although complying with the Clean Power Plan will be a challenge, states tackle problems of this magnitude on a regular basis. We think it would be irresponsible to ignore federal law, and that is why we intend to develop a compliant Clean Power Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John W. Hickenlooper".

John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor of Colorado