



A Closer Look at Gina McCarthy

This week the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee will hold a nomination hearing for Gina McCarthy, nominee to lead the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and current EPA Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation.

EPA Failure: Sharing Scientific Data with Congress, American Public

When the President took office in January of 2009, he promised his Administration would be the most transparent in history. Former Administrator Lisa Jackson once promised to focus on core issues that would “be implemented with unparalleled transparency.”

Ms. McCarthy and other EPA officials have repeatedly backtracked on promises to Members of Congress to make the scientific data available to Congress, the public, and scientists over the last year and a half.

This war over the secret data dates back to 1997, when during the 105th Congress, then-EPA Administrator Carol Browner refused to provide Congress and the public access to underlying data for their rulemaking. In response, Congress passed legislation mandating that federal agencies ensure that data produced under an award be made available to the public.

Recently, [in a letter to EPA](#) from EPW Ranking Member David Vitter (R-La.) and House Science, Space, and Technology Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas), the two Senators reiterated multiple communications from Congress requesting the release of data which are the basis for nearly all the health and benefit claims from Clean Air Act rulemaking in this Administration.

EPA relies on certain studies to say that certain pollutants cause chronic mortality, and to calculate extraordinarily high benefit estimates to justify a number of costly CAA regulations. In fact, estimates say that up to 80 percent of all perceived benefits from regulations are the result of these studies, yet Congress and the Public can't see the EPA's data from them.

So why, after nearly 20 years of requests, is EPA still trying so hard to prevent the release of the scientific data? What is EPA afraid of?

Additional new rules and regulations are expected again to be some of the most costly the federal government has ever issued, yet the public, scientists, and Congress have not yet seen the scientific data verifying the EPA's claims.

EPW Republicans are still waiting to see the EPA's secret data used in the following rules:

- Cross State Air Pollution Rule finalized in July 2011
- Mercury and Air Toxics Standards finalized in December 2011

- Particulate Matter_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards finalized in December 2012
- Boiler MACT reconsidered final rules issued January 2013
- Tier III Gasoline Sulfur Rule finalized in April 2013
- Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards expected in October 2013