

NEWS RELEASE

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Lubbock Chamber joins legal action against costly EPA ‘Regional Haze Rule’

LUBBOCK, Texas – The Lubbock Chamber of Commerce has joined an effort challenging the EPA’s federal takeover of the regional haze air permitting process in court to help protect Texas businesses from a likely \$2 billion cost to implement.

By teaming up with the Texas Association of Business, the U.S. Chamber and 25 other Chambers from across Texas, the Lubbock Chamber is seeking to intervene in support of a lawsuit against the EPA filed by the State of Texas.

In this case, the Lubbock Chamber is considered an intervenor, or an organization that is not a plaintiff or defendant in a case but may be affected by the issues involved that submits specialized information or expertise to the court.

“The Chamber’s most fundamental responsibility is to advocate on behalf of the business community,” said Beth Bridges, Chairwoman of the Lubbock Chamber. “We will continue to fight for job creators and protect the Lubbock economy from costly regulations.”

In 1999, Texas began a multi-state coordination effort to address the regional haze requirements of the federal Clean Air Act. That effort resulted in the state’s adoption on Feb. 25, 2009, of a State Implementation Plan (SIP) which would demonstrate that Texas was in compliance with interim standards for visibility in national parks and other Class I areas. On Jan. 5, 2016, EPA published in the Federal Register its disapproval of Texas’ regional haze plan and the implementation of an alternate Federal Implementation Plan (FIP).

The FIP will cost at least \$2 billion for companies in Texas to implement in the next few years, according to the EPA. As a result, industry speculates that the rule could force some power plants to go offline, and drive up electricity costs Texans.

“The EPA’s actions are a prime example of federal agency overreach and do nothing to further reach the goal intended by the Clean Air Act,” said Beth Bridges, Chairwoman of the Lubbock Chamber. “The state’s implementation plan was developed in strict compliance with the legislation and is achieving the goals outlined in the Act.”

The Lubbock Chamber of Commerce represents over 2,000 businesses and over 79,000 employees on the South Plains which accounts for over \$2 billion in annual household earnings in Lubbock and West Texas. The Chamber has twice earned the distinguished 5-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and is a two-time Chamber of the Year recognized by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

Other Chambers of Commerce supporting this action include:

Bay City Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, Baytown Chamber of Commerce, Cedar Park Chamber of Commerce, Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce, Frisco Chamber of Commerce, Grapevine Chamber of Commerce, Greater Angleton Chamber of Commerce, Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, Greater Hewitt Chamber of Commerce, Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce, Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce, Henderson Area Chamber of Commerce, Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce, Longview Chamber of Commerce, Lubbock Chamber of Commerce, Mineral Wells Chamber of Commerce, Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce, Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce, Rockwall Area Chamber of Commerce, San Angelo Chamber of Commerce, South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce, Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce, Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce, and Victoria Chamber of Commerce.)

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