Our Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is developing regulations to limit dangerous and deadly air pollution that threatens the health of our families. But that plan is now at risk, as corporate polluters are working to roll back the strong protections initially proposed. We need to make sure our MDE stands up for our families and holds polluters accountable as Governor O’Malley’s Administration works to finalize this critical clean air plan for our state.

AIR POLLUTION IS MAKING US SICK
More than five million Marylanders live in areas with unsafe air that is poisoned by smog and sulfur dioxide pollution. Breathing smog is like getting a sunburn on your lungs that hurts every time you inhale.

Smog and sulfur dioxide pollution contribute to more severe asthma attacks, heart attacks, and even premature death from heart and lung disease. When smog levels rise, air-quality alert days mean that children, seniors, and other vulnerable groups must stay inside or face serious risks to their health.¹

THE MAJORITY OF MARYLAND FAMILIES ARE AT RISK
Maryland families suffer from the worst air quality on the Atlantic Coast. More than 85 percent of Marylanders live in areas that fail to meet the nation’s safe air standards. Baltimore in particular has the highest rates of both childhood and adult asthma in the state, surpassing national averages with more than a quarter of high school students who have been diagnosed with asthma at some point.²

While air pollution can be harmful to everyone, it’s especially dangerous for children, seniors, and those

MOST OF MARYLAND SUFFERS FROM UNSAFE AIR
Maryland counties that fail to meet federal health-protective standards for smog pollution

OUTDATED COAL PLANTS THREATEN OUR HEALTH
Only 5 of the 13 coal units in Maryland have modern pollution-cutting technology for both sulfur dioxide and smog-causing nitrogen oxides. None of the five are using their technology to the maximum extent possible to reduce pollution.
already suffering from respiratory or heart disease. There are more than 1.1 million children, 645,000 seniors, and nearly half a million asthma sufferers in Maryland whose health is put at greater risk from air pollution. And communities of color in Maryland suffer from even higher rates of asthma and asthma-related hospitalizations and death.

**COAL PLANTS ARE A MAJOR SOURCE OF AIR POLLUTION**

The handful of coal plants in Maryland are responsible for belching out a whopping 44 percent of all dangerous sulfur dioxide emissions in the state and 14 percent of all smog-causing nitrogen oxides. While some of the state’s coal plants have modern technology to reduce these pollutants, most fail to use it consistently. Other plants don’t have modern pollution-cutting technology at all. This puts our air and our health at risk.

**AN AIR POLLUTION PLAN THAT WORKS**

Our families deserve a plan that will ensure all Marylanders have safe air to breathe. In order to protect our families from dangerous and deadly pollution, MDE must hold polluters accountable, not let them off the hook.

MDE’s final regulations should require that all coal plants install and use the most advanced pollution-cutting technology available.

**YOU CAN HELP CLEAN UP OUR AIR**

- Send a comment to the Maryland Department of the Environment to tell them you want the strongest possible plan to limit pollution from coal plants
- Join the Sierra Club at a public hearing
- Write a letter to the editor of your local paper demanding that Governor O’Malley clean up our air by limiting air pollution from coal plants

Learn more and take action at sc.org/cleanairmd

**ENDNOTES**

2. Baltimore City Health Department, Asthma in Baltimore: http://www.baltimorehealth.org/asthma.html