

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 17, 2025

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

We are writing to express our concern regarding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposal to eliminate the 2009 Endangerment Finding and what this uncertainty will mean for the State of Michigan and for our constituents' health, safety, and economic future.¹

The Endangerment Finding requires EPA to protect people from the pollution that causes climate change and its devastating impacts. Denying this danger does not change the fact that pollution from fossil fuels is heating our planet, producing more extreme weather disasters, and imposing devastating costs on families, especially the most vulnerable.

It is well-documented that climate change drives extreme weather. Rising global temperatures due to climate change contribute to more tornadoes in our region, smoke from more intense wildfires, and more extreme heat, among other impacts. The threats are having a severe impact in communities across our state.

In Michigan, unpredictability between seasons is becoming the new normal. In 2024 alone, Michiganders endured eight extreme weather events that each caused more than \$1 billion in damages, totaling \$23.6 billion and contributing to the tragic loss of nearly 100 lives across the Midwest.² Research from the University of Michigan shows that heat waves and cold spells are becoming more common on the Great Lakes, threatening our \$7 billion fishing industry and the surrounding communities that depend on it.³ Precipitation in the Great Lakes region has risen 14 percent since 1951, leading to record-breaking rainfall and flooding, including across Southeast

¹ "Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases Under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act." 27 Feb. 2025. *United States Environmental Protection Agency*. Retrieved from: <https://www.epa.gov/climate-change/endangerment-and-cause-or-contribute-findings-greenhouse-gases-under-section-202a>.

² "NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters. 2025." *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/>, DOI: 10.25921/stkw-7w73.

³ "The Great Lakes are in an extreme new era." 4 Jun. 2025. *University of Michigan*. Retrieved from: <https://news.umich.edu/the-great-lakes-are-in-an-extreme-new-era/>.

Michigan.⁴ These storms and temperature swings are also devastating Michigan’s agricultural industry, and our cherry farmers reported losses of up to 80 percent of their crops during the 2024 harvest.⁵

This year alone, Michigan has already experienced 30 tornadoes — more than double our annual average.⁶ At the same time, for the third summer in a row, hazardous smoke from Canadian wildfires blanketed Michigan skies, part of a record-breaking season with more than 4,000 fires burning 18.3 million acres.⁷ Michigan has also faced catastrophic flooding in recent years, with storms overwhelming outdated infrastructure, breaching dams, and devastating communities from Midland to Detroit.^{[8][9]} These events underscore how climate change is fueling both more frequent extreme storms and dangerous wildfire smoke, directly threatening the health and safety of our constituents.

Extreme heat is also a growing crisis. Heat stress already causes nearly 170 hospitalizations per year in Michigan, and Detroit is, on average, 8 degrees hotter than surrounding rural communities, disproportionately harming communities of color and low-income families.^{[10][11]} Rising temperatures are driving more respiratory and heat-related health issues, while this past winter was the warmest and least snowy since 1939 across mid-Michigan.¹² Several cities, including Detroit, Grand Rapids, Traverse City, all broke records for their warmest winter on record in 2023-2024.¹³

4 Witsut, F. “Record rainfall brings flooding to metro Detroit as more showers are expected.” 3 Apr. 2025. *The Detroit Free Press*. Retrieved from: <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2025/04/03/michigan-flooding-rainfall-weather-forecast/82789229007/>.

5 Lundy, T. “Growers raising concerns of extreme weather events impacting crops.” 11 Jul. 2025. *WPBN/WGTU*. Retrieved from: <https://midmichigannow.com/news/local/growers-raising-concerns-of-extreme-weather-events-impacting-crops>.

6 Torregrossa, M. “Saturday’s tornado pushes 2025 higher into Michigan’s most tornado years.” 28 Jul. 2025. *MLive.com*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mlive.com/news/2025/07/saturdays-tornado-pushes-2025-higher-into-michigans-most-tornado-years.html>.

7 House, K. “Smoky summers are Michigan’s new norm, experts say.” 12 Aug. 2025. *Bridge Michigan*. Retrieved from: <https://bridgemi.com/michigan-environment-watch/smoky-summer-are-michigans-new-norm-experts-say/>.

8 Witsut, F. “Mid-Michigan flooding tops 1986 disaster, the state’s worst in modern history.” 20 May 2020. *The Detroit Free Press*. Retrieved from: <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/05/20/michigan-flooding-1986-disaster/5227525002/>.

9 Witsut, F. “Record rainfall brings flooding to metro Detroit as more showers are expected.” 3 Apr. 2025. *The Detroit Free Press*. Retrieved from: <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2025/04/03/michigan-flooding-rainfall-weather-forecast/82789229007/>.

10 Knowlton, K. “Climate Change and Health: Extreme Heat.” 2025. *Natural Resources Defense Council*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/climate-change-and-health-extreme-heat/#/map/detail/MI>.

11 “Hotter temps worsen health inequalities in Detroit.” 16 Jan. 2025. *Planet Detroit*. Retrieved from: <https://planetdetroit.org/2025/01/detroit-urban-heat-islands-inequality/>.

12 Wilson, K. “Official: Warmest Michigan winter on record.” 14 Mar. 2024. *WLNS*. Retrieved from: <https://www.wlns.com/weather-wednesday/official-warmest-michigan-winter-on-record/>.

13 “Climate Perspectives.” 2024. *University of North Carolina*. Retrieved from: <https://sercc.oasis.unc.edu/Map.php?date=2024-02->

The dangers of dismantling environmental protections are not abstract in Michigan. For decades, Ann Arbor residents have been forced to contend with the spread of the Gelman dioxane plume, a toxic groundwater contamination that continues to migrate toward private drinking water wells and threatens the Huron River, which supplies drinking water to more than 125,000 people.¹⁴ At the same time, we still live with the painful legacy of the Flint water crisis. While Flint has finally completed its lead service line replacement after 11 years, the crisis exposed more than 100,000 residents to contaminated water and left lasting health and economic consequences for an entire community.¹⁵ These real examples underscore the importance of maintaining strong federal protections.

By dismantling the Endangerment Finding, the very foundation of climate protection is being stripped away, which undermines vehicle standards, power plant rules, oil and gas safeguards, and other environmental regulations. This rollback gives polluters a free pass to pollute at the expense of families across our state, region, and country. It means continued climate chaos, worsening health harms, and higher costs for our constituents, particularly in frontline communities already overburdened by pollution.

EPA's own findings — in 2009, 2015, 2023, and in 2024 — have reaffirmed the overwhelming scientific evidence that greenhouse gas emissions endanger public health and welfare. Rolling back the Endangerment Finding erases climate science from policymaking and abandons EPA's responsibility under the Clean Air Act.

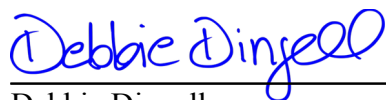
We urge you to maintain the Endangerment Finding and uphold EPA's duty to protect the health, safety, and economic well-being of Michigan and communities across the country. Our constituents cannot afford the consequences of climate denial.

Sincerely,

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¹⁴ Eberbach, J. "New detections of Gelman plume reported in drinking water wells near Ann Arbor." 27 Jul. 2025. *MLive*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2025/07/new-detections-of-gelman-plume-reported-in-drinking-water-wells-near-ann-arbor.html>.

¹⁵ Reinhart, M. "Flint finishes lead pipe replacement project 11 years after water crisis." 1 Jul. 2025. *The Detroit News*. Retrieved from: <https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2025/07/01/flint-finishes-lead-pipe-replacement-project-11-years-after-water-crisis/84439417007/>.



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



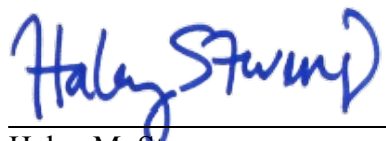
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



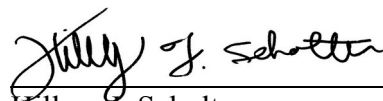
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