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WHEREAS, clean air is vital to a region's overall health, with direct effects on the population and economy; and,

WHEREAS, smog pollution can lead to or exacerbate health concerns including asthma, heart attacks, stroke, and premature death; and,

WHEREAS, Allegheny County received an 'F' grade in the 2014 American Lung Association's State of the Air report, while the Pittsburgh metro area was ranked as the 21st worst city for smog pollution and 6th worst for soot pollution; and,

WHEREAS, the Environmental Quality Board of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is in the process of proposing new rules to limit emissions of smog-forming compounds such as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds by requiring the implementation of Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT); and,

WHEREAS, these newly proposed guidelines and rules, while well-intended, fail to set sufficiently stringent emission limits for nitrogen oxides at coal-fired power plants that are needed to protect the health of Pennsylvanians; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed RACT technology is inferior to the capabilities of currently installed technology known as Selective Catalytic Reduction controls on the vast majority of coal-fired electric generating plants in Pennsylvania; and,

WHEREAS, the rules also allow for averaging of emissions across facilities and over long periods of time, which would allow facilities to create hot spots of pollution in some communities; and,

WHEREAS, the proposals by the Department of Environmental Protection are up to four times less stringent than those other, similarly-situated mid-Atlantic states are proposing; and,

WHEREAS, more than 8 million Pennsylvanians live in areas that are not in attainment of federal health-based smog standards.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh urges the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to revise its proposed rules to limit smog-forming emissions from coal-fired electric generating facilities in Pennsylvania to require effective operation of Selective Catalytic Reduction controls for the benefit of residents of southwestern Pennsylvania and beyond.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Will of Council shall be circulated to Senators Bob Casey and Pat Toomey, Congressman Mike Doyle, DEP Secretary Christopher Abruzzo, Governor Tom Corbett, EPA Region 3 Administrator Shawn Garvin, and Director of Region 3 Air Protection Division Diana Escher.

Sponsored by Councilman Dan Gilman and Councilman Corey O'Connor

Co-sponsored by Councilmembers Deb Gross, Darlene Harris, Theresa Kail-Smith, Natalia Rudiak, R. Daniel Lavelle, Rev. Ricky V. Burgess and Council President Bruce Kraus

Bruce Kraus
President of Council

Attest: Mary Beth Doheny
Clerk of Council

In Council, May 27, 2014