Hello, I am Cindy Liverance, the Vice President of Program for the American Lung Association in Colorado and I appreciate having the opportunity to speak with you today. While I am in the Vice President of Programs for the ALA-Colorado, I am also an asthmatic and the mother of an asthmatic.

The ALA issued its annual State of the Air report each spring and this year’s report showed that warmer temperatures led to much worse ozone pollution in cities across the nation in 2010 to 2013, including here in Denver. Over 147 million people lived in counties that suffered too many unhealthy ozone days during that period. Even though we’ve made great strides in cutting air pollution, warmer temperatures will make it much more likely that we will see more years with too many unhealthy ozone days.

For the millions of American who live with chronic lung disease, high ozone can make it difficult for them to breathe, cause them to cough and wheeze and send them to the emergency room and hospitals. Breathing high ozone can even increase their risk of dying early. Children growing up where ozone levels are high may risk having lung diseases later in life.

We need the Clean Power Plan to protect public health. Power plant pollution makes people sick and cuts lives short. The ALA urges the EPA to set a final plan within a year that provides the strongest limits on carbon pollutions. Anything less short changes our health.

As a person who lives with asthma but also likes to exercise outdoor and I have had to learn to base my outside activities on the level of air pollution. I don’t like exercising indoor but on high pollution days I have no choice as I don’t want to breathe in toxic air pollutants.

But having to make the decision to exercise indoor or outdoors is a simple choice compared to some of the choices made when my daughter couldn’t breathe because she was playing outside at school on high pollution days. There is nothing more terrifying than having your child say “I can’t breathe, Mommy, help me.” You feel helpless. My daughter is grown now and can make her own decisions on when to be outside but I want EPA to adopt the strongest standards in the Clean Power Plan that will cut carbon pollution so other Colorado children will have brighter, healthier futures ahead of them.

The ALA-Colorado hosts a weeklong summer camp (Champ Camp) specifically for children with asthma. Champ Camp took place last week and I asked all of the campers if the air they breathed was important and they all said “yes”. One comment was “why are adults keeping our air dirty?” I had no answer. Please help provide the answer.

In closing I submit to you photos of a few of these Colorado children and volunteers who live with asthma that continues to be affected by increasing poor air quality. Help us help them.

Thank you,

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