



**MOMS**  
*clean air*  
**FORCE**  
FIGHTING FOR  
OUR KIDS' HEALTH



## MEDIA ADVISORY

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### **MOMS OPPOSE ANDREW WHEELER'S NOMINATION TO LEAD EPA; MOMS TRAVELING FROM 12 STATES AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS DURING WHEELER'S CONTESTED HEARING**

(Washington, D.C.—Tuesday, January 15th, 2019)—Tomorrow, and during a government shutdown in which his staff goes unpaid, Andrew Wheeler—Acting Administrator at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—will face questions from members of the [Senate Environment and Public Works \(EPW\) Committee](#) at his nomination hearing on **Wednesday, January 16th at 10 a.m. in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.**

Wheeler—a former coal industry lobbyist whose every action as Acting Administrator proves that his top priority is protecting polluters, not people—will be interviewed for his promotion in front of more than just the EPW Senators. **More than 20 mothers with young children seated by their side** will be travelling from a dozen states [AZ, AK, CO, IA, MA, MD, MS, NC, NJ, RI, TX, WV] to bear witness at the hearing. These mothers oppose Wheeler's nomination because he is a direct threat to their children's health and future. This nominee's fingerprints are all over the most regressive environmental proposals of the Trump administration, including the recent effort to dismantle our life-saving mercury standards—the most cynical of the Trump-Wheeler toxic agenda.

Now let's meet some of the  **moms who will be available to media to answer questions** before and directly after the hearing (with several other moms available upon request):

- **Heather McTeer Toney** served as the first African-American, first female, and youngest mayor of Greenville, Mississippi at age 27 before serving as Regional Administrator for the EPA's Southeast Region under President Obama. During her tenure at the EPA, Heather protected public health and the environment in one of the most populated and diverse of the EPA's ten regions with oversight in eight southeastern states [AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN] as well as six federally recognized tribes. Heather now serves as the National Field Director for Moms Clean Air Force. Heather is encouraging her state's senior Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) -- a member of the EPW committee -- to closely examine Wheeler's record as Acting Administrator and understand how this will hurt Mississippi's children before making a decision on his nomination.
- **Columba Sainz** hails from Phoenix, Arizona, but was born and raised on the border of Tijuana, Mexico, and San Diego, California. For the past decade, Columba has worked in the Latina community, with a focus on early childhood education, youth engagement, and faith outreach. As the field organizer for Moms Clean Air Force in Arizona, Columba mobilizes Latina moms through the newly launched [Ecomadres](#) program. Pregnant with her third child, Columba is deeply concerned about Acting Administrator Wheeler's plan to allow more mercury pollution in our air from coal fired power plants, despite the fact that mercury is known to harm fetal and child brain development. Columba's views have been featured in outlets such as Telemundo and Univision and in this recent [interview](#) for Yale Climate Connections.

- **Dee Dee Belmares** is a life-long resident of San Antonio, Texas, where she serves as field organizer for Moms Clean Air Force. Dee Dee is an **outspoken** advocate for clean air protections for vulnerable children. As a small business owner and a mom, she understands that economic growth and clean air protections go hand in hand. Dee Dee is particularly concerned about Acting Administrator Wheeler’s attack on our mercury standards; **Texas has benefited more** from mercury pollution reductions than any other state.

To learn more about Andrew Wheeler’s **radical and regressive actions at the EPA** — and his involvement in more than a dozen proposed rollbacks of environmental regulation covering **cars, power plants, fracking, and more** — please see:

- **[“This Coal Lobbyist Should Not Run the E.P.A.”](#)**
- **[“Moms Oppose Wheeler’s Nomination to be EPA Administrator”](#)**
- **[“Ten Reasons Why Moms Oppose Wheeler as EPA Chief”](#)**
- **[“Wheeler’s Toxic Chemical Agenda Is Dangerous”](#)**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** To secure a one-on-one interview with any of our mothers travelling to attend the Wheeler hearing, journalists can email Sasha Tenenbaum at **[stenenbaum@momscleanairforce.org](mailto:stenenbaum@momscleanairforce.org)** or call (917) 887-0146.

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*Moms Clean Air Force is a community of over one million moms—and dads—working together to combat air pollution, including the urgent crisis of our changing climate. We work across the US on national and local policy issues, through a vibrant network of state-based field teams. Learn more at **[www.momscleanairforce.org](http://www.momscleanairforce.org)**.*