



Media Advisory

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Gov. Quinn vetoes coal gasification bills, saves taxpayers' money and protects lung health *Interviews available*

WHAT: This afternoon, Gov. Quinn vetoed two bills that would have allowed the construction of two coal gasification plants in Illinois. By stopping these dirty plants from being built, he ensured lower utility costs and safer air for Illinois residents.

WHY: The process of gasification turns coal and refinery waste into natural gas while releasing harmful air pollution, and producing natural gas from coal is dirtier than the natural gas we now use to heat our homes. SB 3388 (Leucadia) and SB 1927 (Power Holdings) would also have forced all Illinois utility customers to pay for dirtier and more expensive energy.

These bills were passed quickly and without regard for the health and financial risks they require Illinois families to bear. Had they been enacted, Illinois would be committed to getting nearly 25% of its natural gas from these two companies' plants for 10 to 30 years at above market prices, all while being forced to breathe more air pollution!

WHO: Brian Urbaszewski, Director of Environmental Health Programs
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STATEMENT: Governor Quinn deserves great praise for putting the health of Illinois residents before corporate monopoly profits. If Senate Bill 3388 and Senate Bill 1927 had been allowed to become Illinois law, they would have simultaneously raised home heating costs for Illinois residents while adding hundreds of tons of lung-damaging air pollution every year to the skies over Illinois.

Every year in Illinois approximately 620 people lose their lives to air pollution from coal power plants, and thousands more are hospitalized for asthma attacks, heart attacks and strokes. With Chicago's asthma rates already higher than the national average and Illinois' pollution levels at unsafe levels, these power plants were the last thing we needed.

Governor Quinn often cites the Illinois Constitution, which states that each person has the right to a healthful environment. Today, by vetoing Senate Bill 3388 and Senate Bill 1927, he showed that he takes to heart his responsibility to protect the health and welfare of the public and to ensure a healthy future for their children.

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Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago has been a local public health leader since 1906. Today, the association addresses asthma, COPD, lung cancer, tobacco control and air quality with a comprehensive approach involving research, education and advocacy activities. For more information, visit www.lungchicago.org.