



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
REGION 2  
290 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

JUN 28 2004

Honorable Sila María Calderón  
Gobernadora de Puerto Rico  
La Fortaleza  
PO Box 902-0082  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902-0082

Dear Governor Calderon:

Fine-particle pollution represents one of the most significant barriers to clean air facing our nation today. These tiny particles - about 1/30<sup>th</sup> the diameter of a human hair - have been scientifically linked to serious human health problems. Their ability to be suspended in air for long periods of time makes them a public health threat far beyond the source of emissions. An important part of our nation's commitment to clean, healthy air deals with reducing levels of this fine-particle or PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution.

In February, Puerto Rico submitted its recommended boundaries for PM<sub>2.5</sub> attainment and nonattainment areas. After a thorough review of your recommendations, EPA agrees that Puerto Rico is in attainment at this time. This means that across Puerto Rico, all areas meet the more protective, health-based fine-particle standard. That is truly good news for the residents of Puerto Rico.

We challenge you to not only maintain, but also continue the progress you have made toward clean air. It is a commitment to no backsliding in the clean air status for fine particles that Puerto Rico has achieved. You will hear from us again in November when EPA makes its final decisions on PM<sub>2.5</sub> designations determining those areas that meet or do not meet the fine particle standards.

The Bush Administration has made the reduction of fine particle pollution a critical element of a comprehensive national clean air strategy. This strategy includes EPA's recent rule to reduce pollution from nonroad diesel engines, and more stringent controls on diesel trucks and buses starting in 2007. These two rules are important components of EPA's efforts to help states and localities meet the more protective national fine-particle and 8-hour ozone air quality standards. Together these rules will help all areas of the country achieve cleaner air.

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We look forward to a continued dialogue with you as we work together to implement the PM2.5 standards. Should you or your staff have any questions, I invite you to contact me at (212) 637-5000 or have your staff contact Walter Mugdan, Director of the Division of Environmental Planning and Protection at (212) 637-3724. Again, we congratulate you on the clean air fine particle status that Puerto Rico has achieved.

Sincerely,



Jane M. Kenny  
Regional Administrator

cc: Esteban Mujica, Esq., Commissioner  
Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board