Congresswoman Matsui Commends Hard Work that has Helped Improve Sacramento County’s Air Quality

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-06) praised the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) decision to redesignate Sacramento County from a nonattainment area to an attainment area for the coarse particulate 24-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard (PM$_{10}$ NAAQS). This decision by the EPA signifies that Sacramento’s air quality is improving and is now meeting the federal PM$_{10}$ standard.

“This announcement demonstrates that there has been continued air quality improvement in the Sacramento region over the last decade,” said Congresswoman Doris Matsui. “We all desire clean air for our friends, our family and ourselves. Clean air is essential to being a vibrant, economically successful region. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Breathe California and the Cleaner Air Partnership, we continue to provide greater protection to our public health and improve our environment.”

PM$_{10}$ particles can pass through the throat and nose and enter in the lungs, causing potentially serious heart and lung health effects, making the EPA’s designation a positive sign that the air quality and health of the Sacramento region is improving. On September 12, 2013, Regional Administrator Jared Blumenfeld signed a notice of final rulemaking to approve California’s request. The EPA approval of the maintenance plan and redesignation request means that the area will remain in attainment for at least the next 10 years.

“The SMAQMD Board of Directors welcomes this action on behalf of the residents of Sacramento County. This is another positive air quality milestone for the district and again demonstrates the steady work of our staff, the Air Resources Board and EPA,” said Phil Serna, Board Chair of SMAQMD.
Earlier this year the EPA determined that the Sacramento nonattainment area has attained and continues to attain the 2006 NAAQS for PM$_{2.5}$ 24-hour fine particulate matter. This compliance is critical because these smaller particles can cause significant health problems including decreased lung function, cancer and premature death.