

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 638

To amend the Clean Air Act with respect to exceptional event demonstrations,
and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 3, 2015

Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CORNYN,
Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. VITTER) introduced the following bill; which was
read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public
Works

A BILL

To amend the Clean Air Act with respect to exceptional
event demonstrations, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Commonsense Legisla-
5 tive Exceptional Events Reforms Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. CLEAN AIR ACT EXCEPTIONAL EVENTS.**

7 Section 319(b) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C.
8 7619(b)) is amended—

9 (1) in paragraph (1)(B)—

1 (A) in clause (i), by inserting “or” after
 2 the semicolon;

3 (B) by striking clause (ii); and

4 (C) by redesignating clause (iii) as clause
 5 (ii); and

6 (2) in paragraph (3)—

7 (A) in subparagraph (B)(iv), by striking
 8 “to petition the Administrator to” and inserting
 9 “to submit a petition (in this section referred to
 10 as an ‘exceptional event demonstration’) to the
 11 Administrator to”; and

12 (B) by adding at the end the following:

13 “(C) CRITERIA FOR DETERMINATION OF
 14 EXCEPTIONAL EVENT DEMONSTRATION.—

15 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The criteria for
 16 evidence, analyses, and documentation ap-
 17 plicable to approval or disapproval of an
 18 exceptional event demonstration under the
 19 regulations under this section shall be stat-
 20 ed with specificity in order to minimize the
 21 discretion of the Administrator in approv-
 22 ing or disapproving that demonstration.

23 “(ii) STATE PARTICIPATION.—The
 24 Administrator shall develop the criteria in
 25 conjunction with input from the States.

“(iii) CONTENTS.—The criteria shall reflect the varying levels of technical expertise and resources available in State and local agencies and the varying availability of meteorological and other monitoring data in rural areas, and may vary with respect to different regions.

“(iv) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the criteria, the Administrator shall consider the use of an expedited or streamlined approval process and conditions under which exceptional event demonstrations may be suitable for such a process.

“(D) TIMING OF DETERMINATION OF EXCEPTIONAL EVENT DEMONSTRATION.—

“(i) DEADLINE FOR DETERMINATION.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after submission of an exceptional event demonstration, the Administrator shall approve, disapprove, or request additional information from a State regarding the exceptional event demonstration.

“(II) ADMINISTRATION.—If the Administrator does not approve, disapprove, or request additional information relating to an exceptional event demonstration within the 90-day period described in subclause (I), the demonstration shall be considered to be approved on the day after the date on which that 90-day period ends.

“(ii) DEADLINE IF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator requests additional information from a State regarding an exceptional event demonstration under clause (i), not later than 90 days after the submission of that additional information, the Administrator shall approve or disapprove the demonstration.

“(II) ADMINISTRATION.—If the Administrator does not approve or disapprove a demonstration for which additional information is submitted within the 90-day period described in

1 subclause (I), the demonstration shall
2 be considered to be approved.

3 “(E) BURDEN OF PROOF.—The regula-
4 tions promulgated under this section shall pro-
5 vide that—

6 “(i) a determination by the Adminis-
7 trator with respect to approval or dis-
8 approval of an exceptional event dem-
9 onstration be based on a preponderance of
10 the evidence; and

11 “(ii) in making a determination, the
12 Administrator—

13 “(I) shall accord substantial def-
14 erence to the findings of the State ex-
15 ceptional event demonstration; and

16 “(II) may develop and use anal-
17 yses and consider evidence not pro-
18 vided in the exceptional event dem-
19 onstration, subject to the condition
20 that the analyses are developed by the
21 Environmental Protection Agency.

22 “(F) APPEALS.—

23 “(i) DISAPPROVAL.—

24 “(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to
25 subclause (II), disapproval by the Ad-

1 administrator of an exceptional event
 2 demonstration shall be considered
 3 final action subject to judicial review
 4 under section 307(b).

5 “(II) LIMITATION.—Notwith-
 6 standing subclause (I), disapproval by
 7 the Administrator of an exceptional
 8 event demonstration shall only be sub-
 9 ject to appeal by the State that sub-
 10 mitted the exceptional event dem-
 11 onstration.

12 “(ii) APPROVAL.—Approval by the
 13 Administrator of an exceptional event dem-
 14 onstration shall not be subject to appeal or
 15 other judicial action.”.

16 **SEC. 3. REVISION OF REGULATIONS.**

17 After providing for a notice and comment period, but
 18 not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of
 19 this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protec-
 20 tion Agency shall revise the regulations under section
 21 319(b) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7619(b)) to carry
 22 out the amendments made by this Act.

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