UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

November 20, 2018

Dr. Hector L. Delgado, Ph.D.
Executive Officer
The Society for the Study of Social Problems
901 McClung Tower
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-0490

Dear Dr. Delgado:

Thank you for your letter dated October 22, 2018, to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acting Administrator Andrew R. Wheeler, in which you shared your concern about the need to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase the use of renewable energy. Your letter has been referred to my office for response.

The most recent *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks*, published in April of this year, shows that the total U.S. GHG emissions in 2016 declined 11 percent since 2005, and that the U.S. electric power sector emissions have dropped by nearly 25 percent during the same period https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/inventory-us-greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-sinks. Data collected under the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program (GHGRP), which receives emission reports from more than 8,500 large emitting facilities and fuel suppliers across the U.S., comprising approximately 85-90 percent of total U.S. GHG emissions, indicate that U.S. GHG emissions declined by 2.6 percent from 2016 to 2017, and GHG emissions from large power plants declined by 4.5 percent during the same period https://www.epa.gov/ghgreporting.

The data demonstrate that the U.S. is making substantial progress in reducing GHG emissions, primarily through technical innovation that is transforming much of the energy sector. EPA plays a role in encouraging such innovation through several partnership programs that remove market barriers for advanced technologies through provision of tools, technical assistance and serving as a credible voice in defining and conveying best practices that increase energy efficiency and reduce air pollution. These include the well-known Energy Star program, as well as EPA's Energy Supply Partnership Programs, Methane Emission Reduction Partnership Programs, and Fluorinated Gas Emission Reduction Partnership Programs. In 2016 alone, these EPA programs achieved annual emission reduction benefits of 444 million metric tons of CO_2-equivalent and cost savings of $36.9 billion. More information about the EPA's partnership programs is available at https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/atmospheric-program-partnerships-2015-2016-achievements.

If you are interested in learning more about how EPA's programs protect human health and the environment, please visit our website at https://www.epa.gov/.

Thank you again for your letter. We appreciate your comments and concerns.

Sincerely,

William L. Wehrum
Assistant Administrator