

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

MEMO

To: Bryan Garcia, President and CEO, Connecticut Green Bank

cc: Lucy Charpentier, Manager of Evaluation, Measurement and Verification, Connecticut Green Bank
Eric Shrago, Director of Operations, Connecticut Green Bank

Subject: CoBRA Review

I have reviewed some of the background materials available from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on their "Co-Benefits Risk Assessment" (CoBRA) screening model for estimating health and economic benefits of policies that affect air pollution. I also listened to a webinar presentation by Denise Mulholland of EPA about the uses and limitations of the Co-BRA Screening Model.

The CoBRA model turns estimated air pollution reductions into estimated health impacts in nine areas: mortality, non-fatal heart attacks, hospitalizations, bronchitis, respiration symptoms, asthma emergency room visits, asthma exacerbations, days of limited physical activity and work days lost. The estimated health impacts are then converted into estimated cost savings. In EPA's "User Manual for the Co-Benefits Risk Assessment Screening Model" there is a lengthy description of how they used numerous epidemiology studies to estimate health improvements from decreased air pollution and specifically from decreased levels of small particulate matter (PM 2.5). This section of the manual has an extensive review of the epidemiology literature used in the model.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) does not have the expertise to evaluate the air pollution modeling or health impacts modeling that went into CoBRA. However the health effects section is well researched and referenced. The model was also submitted for technical peer review by external experts.

The CoBRA model appears to be a well reviewed screening tool to estimate the air pollution related health impacts at the policy level. DPH supports the effects by the Green Bank to find ways to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Toal".

Brian Toal, Epidemiologist 4
Environmental and Occupational Health Program



Phone: (860) 509-7740 • Fax: (860) 509-7785

410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 340308

Hartford, Connecticut 06134-0308

www.ct.gov/dph

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