

February 20, 2007

**Sustainable Pittsburgh Joins Concerned Citizens Call for Allegheny County
Pledge to Support and Strengthen the Local Air Quality Program**

Sustainable Pittsburgh joins with other concerned citizens and organizations in calling upon Allegheny County leaders and the Board of Health to commit to keeping the Air Quality Program local and to provide the program with the staff and resources necessary to ensure healthy air quality for Allegheny County residents.

Sustainable Pittsburgh believes businesses today place a high premium on a clean environment and public health and see that these imperatives are prerequisite to economic prosperity locally and for the region. The opportunity at hand is to deliver a superior locally controlled Air Quality Program whose processes are clear, fair, prompt in processing permit applications, and is highly adept in assisting businesses to determine cost effective means to come into and stay compliant with air quality regulations.

As such, Sustainable Pittsburgh offers support to the Allegheny County Executive in seeking the resources necessary (including state and federal funding and other appropriate funding methods) to sustain the County's Air Quality Program and improve its operations and thereby, better respond to legitimate business concerns while serving as a resource for air quality compliance.

Among rationale Sustainable Pittsburgh sees for Allegheny County continuing its leadership via the Air Quality Program are:

- Retaining leadership of the Air Quality Program, where well-funded and staffed, will advance sustainability (economy, environment, social equity) in the County, and thus region, and serve as a model.
- Local control provides superior local access to decision making.
- Local control benefits from institutional knowledge of the airshed.
- Local control provides more attentiveness and responsiveness to businesses that seek assistance with staying in compliance, and also with public interests, and problem polluters.
- The local program, compared to state regulations, carries unique regulations specific to industries found in the County. This unique need will only increase as the nation moves to a carbon-constrained economy and more emissions become regulated.
- With the program housed in the County Health Department, there is an appropriately close tie to public health issues.

Revenues generated by the local Air Quality Program represent a significant source of funding for the same.