

STATEMENT OF ALEXANDER J. EVANS

June 13, 2000
New York, NY
Docket No. A-99-06

TESTIMONY OF ALEXANDER J. EVANS-SIBLING OF A BROTHER WITH AN IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT-ON THE UNITED STATES ENVIROMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY PROPOSED RULEMAKINGS. 65FR35430.

My name is Alexander J. Evans. I am a student, environmentalist, captain of Haverford College's basketball team, and the outreach coordinator for air for the Clean Air Council. Most importantly, I am a brother. My brother Nicholas is a 26 year-old graduate student at Harvard University. He is a budding political theorist who has always maintained a passion for sports. Although he has continually remained active, my brother suffers from an irregular heartbeat. I do not know how many of you in this room have a family member who suffers from a heart condition or other ailment that is affected by air pollution. I can assure you, however, that if a member of your family suffers from an irregular heartbeat, or for that matter any other serious affliction that is exacerbated by toxic diesel emissions, you will understand the passion of my testimony.

Since I was young I have always looked up to my brother. I owe him so much. He is my role model and I marvel at how much he has managed to teach me. Throughout my childhood I was always amazed at my brother's athletic abilities. I cherished the time that he spent with me in the backyard. From basketball to baseball to soccer he was always willing to spend the time with me. There is no doubt in my mind that my athletic prowess is the direct result of his tireless efforts. As a young child, more than any other pro athlete or entertainer, I looked up to my brother and followed his every step. I will never forget the day when my brother was diagnosed with an irregular heartbeat. I will never forget the sight of my brother running up and down the stairs of the doctor's office with his shirt off and his chest full of devices designed to monitor his heart rate. As I looked at my brother I wondered how someone who had always been deeply involved in athletics could have an irregular heartbeat. I was worried that something was terribly wrong with my brother.

After it was determined that his heart beat at an irregular rate, my brother was told that he would probably never notice his condition. As time passed, however, and the doctors continued to monitor my brother's heart rate they began to worry that his heart would react adversely to the ever-increasing air pollution of large cities. My brother has, to this date, never had a serious episode. Nevertheless, he is still monitored by doctors and he is restricted from exercising when the national ambient air quality standards for ozone reach or surpass either the 1 or 8 hour federal health standards. Essentially the only thing that can seriously aggravate my brothers heart condition is air pollution.

My brother is not alone. Millions of Americans suffer from similar conditions. Many of these individuals do not share my brother's luck. People with irregular heartbeats are extremely susceptible to harmful particulates. Particulates, which constitute a majority of the harmful emission divulged from diesel vehicles, interfere with the body's ability to control its heart rate and rhythm. For someone who suffers from an irregular condition exposure to particulate matter can prove fatal. Recent studies have shown that particulate matter directly limits the body's ability to control the human heart rate. The evidence is clear. Emissions from unregulated vehicles have a direct affect on our communities. To make matters worse, thousands of people are

unaware that they suffer from an irregular heartbeat. If diesel engines are allowed to keep polluting the air at their current rate, the repercussions will be disastrous. Individuals who once did not have to worry, may soon begin to feel the effects of diesel engine emissions.

Various other conditions, such as asthma and lung disease are also exacerbated by dangerous soot emissions. A recent study estimated that 2,599 premature deaths are caused by soot particles each year in Philadelphia alone. Although diesel exhaust specifically endangers children, the elderly, and those living near highways and bus depots the pollution has an affect on each and every one of us. This is a serious problem.

It worries me that my brother may soon have to deal with this issue every day. It worries me that he lives in a city wrought with pollution and dirty air. I pray that the harmful particulates and nitrous oxides emitted from diesel vehicles will never affect my brother, but I am not confident. This proposed rulemaking will have a direct effect on millions of Americans. Not only will it help children, the elderly, and people with other health conditions, but it will help ease the pain of all of those connected to anyone with the aforementioned health problems. This proposed rulemaking will have a direct effect on the health of millions of individuals and all of those that care for them. If this nation cares about the health of its citizens this proposed rulemaking must be approved. Thank you for allowing me to speak on this crucial issue.