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ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL CHALLENGES INSUFFICIENT REGULATION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM AIRPLANES

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today joined a multistate coalition [in filing a lawsuit](#) challenging the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) decision to regulate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from airplanes at a level that would result in no reductions in emissions as compared to business-as-usual.

The aviation industry is the largest unregulated transportation source of GHGs in the United States, contributing 12 percent of total transportation-related emissions. Given the long lead time necessary for manufacturers to develop new aircraft designs, the EPA's final rule would effectively lock in meaningless standards for years – as the climate emergency grows increasingly dire. In today's lawsuit, Raoul and the coalition argue that the rule is arbitrary, capricious and contrary to law.

"This rule will disproportionately impact communities that experience higher levels of aircraft emissions, which tend to be low-income areas," Raoul said. "I am committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions for all Illinois residents and encourage the EPA to strengthen regulations of harmful airplane emissions."

Aviation emissions are a significant source of the world's total GHG emissions, and the United States is the single largest emitter. Globally, the aviation industry is responsible for approximately 2.4 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions and 12 percent of GHG emissions from all transportation sources. The United States contributes more than a quarter of global aviation GHG emissions, and its emissions from aircraft alone are higher than total GHG emissions in more than 150 countries. GHG emissions from U.S. aircraft are expected to grow 43 percent in the next two decades, and globally, aviation emissions are expected to triple by 2050 unless governments and industry take aggressive action.

Section 231 of the Clean Air Act authorizes and directs the EPA to issue appropriate emission standards for dangerous pollutants from aircraft engines based on a reasonable assessment of aircrafts' contribution to GHG emissions and the technological feasibility of emissions controls. Strengthening emission standards now would not only benefit public health and the environment, but could also lead to consumer savings in the long run and help make American-manufactured aircraft more competitive in markets that are adopting robust GHG emission standards.

However, last month, the EPA finalized standards that lag behind existing technology by more than 10 years and would result in no GHG reductions at all compared to business-as-usual. In fact, the EPA has not even considered any form of emission control that would reduce GHGs, despite its determination that these emissions endanger public health and the environment. The EPA also failed to consider the co-benefits of GHG regulation and the environmental justice impacts of pollution from aircrafts. Aircrafts emit particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and hazardous air pollutants. Residents living within 10 miles of airports – which disproportionately include disadvantaged minority and low-income communities – are exposed to large amounts of these harmful pollutants through emissions from aircraft landing and takeoff operations.

In the lawsuit, Raoul and the coalition argue that the EPA acted arbitrarily, capriciously, and unlawfully by adopting a rule that:

- Fails to reduce emissions at all beyond business-as-usual.
- Lags existing technology by a decade.
- Excluded from consideration more effective alternatives.

In October, Raoul and the multistate coalition urged the EPA to strengthen standards regulating GHG emissions from airplanes and other aircraft.

Joining Raoul in filing the lawsuit are the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Washington.