

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) expressed strong objections today to the Bush administration's plan to relax air quality standards at our national parks and wilderness areas, including Florida's Everglades.

[In a letter to President Bush](#) , Buchanan said the proposal was a "huge mistake" and could degrade air quality in some of the nation's most popular attractions, including the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone National Park.

The administration has proposed a revision to the Clean Air Act that would make it easier to build new power plants near highly protected federal lands by easing restrictions on emissions that cause poor visibility and air quality as well as affect vegetation and wildlife.

"What legacy would we be leaving our children and grandchildren if the sight of our greatest national treasures, such as the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone National Park, were obscured by smog?" Buchanan asked in the letter.

The Congressman expressed his commitment to the expansion of America's energy independence, but noted, "This is a big country. Surely there are many locations to build these facilities that would not require relaxing air standards at the expense of our national parks."