

**Dear Minister for Public Health Sophie Løhde and Minister for the Environment Magnus Heunicke**

The undersigned are writing to you as we know that public health is of great importance to you.

Air pollution increases the risk of cancer, cardiovascular diseases, blood clots, respiratory diseases (asthma, COPD, bronchitis), diabetes and several other serious diseases and health hazards. According to the Danish Health Authority, outdoor air pollution causes approximately 4,000 premature deaths every year in Denmark and causes socio-economic health costs of approximately €8.4 billion<sup>1</sup>.

Outdoor air pollution is thus the third largest risk factor in Denmark only exceeded by smoking and physical inactivity. We determine whether to smoke and be physically active, however, we cannot avoid air pollution. In every breath, we inhale health hazardous particles in the air.

On top of the health burden caused by outdoor air pollution, we must add health effects imposed by indoor air pollution. In homes wood stoves, candles, and cooking fumes are significant indoor pollution sources.

While mortality caused by air pollution is particularly affecting the elderly, morbidity is to a high extent seen also among children with respiratory diseases (In Denmark, about 20% of all pre-schoolchildren and 10% of all schoolchildren have a lung disease).

The undersigned experts hereby suggest that You as responsible ministers:

- 1) Engage on introducing WHO's air quality guidelines as air quality limit values in Denmark by 2027.
- 2) Initiate a large-scale information campaign on air pollution and the consequential health burden.
- 3) Initiate a large-scale information campaign on how to reduce indoor air pollution.

By implementing the WHO air quality guidelines as binding limit values in Denmark by 2027, reducing pollution sources, and thus harvesting the great health benefits, will be much more in focus.

By initiating information campaigns on air pollution and health impacts, the Danish population will become aware of the pollution problem and pollution sources, and thus of how we can all help reduce the pollution indoors and outdoors benefitting ourselves and society.

The undersigned experts are willing to participate in composing information material for the population.

We look forward to a sound cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

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**Morten Kløcker Grønbæk**, chairman of the expert group on health and air pollution, Copenhagen.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.sundhedsstyrelsen.dk/da/borger/straaling\\_-miljoe-og-klima/forurening-og-kemi/luftforurening](https://www.sundhedsstyrelsen.dk/da/borger/straaling_-miljoe-og-klima/forurening-og-kemi/luftforurening)