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Administrator Lisa P. Jackson
Welcome Message for Harvard University 40th Anniversary
November 20, 2010

For 40 years, EPA has led our country's efforts to protect the air we breathe, to safeguard the water that flows into our homes, and to care for the land where we build our communities and grow our food. Since day one our work has relied on steady advances in science, technology and environmental policymaking – advances that have been led by Harvard University.

The changes of the last four decades have shaped everything from the course of industrial innovation to the safety of everyday activities. When we pour a glass of water, we can be confident it is free of pollution. We can breathe easier knowing that our cars are not releasing harmful lead pollution into the air. When we buy an apple at the grocery store, we are assured it will not carry the dustings of extremely dangerous pesticides. Cleaner, greener communities have prospered as attractive locations to buy a home or invest in a new business, while cutting pollution linked to cancer, heart disease, respiratory illness and other conditions has provided trillions of dollars in health benefits. Today a thriving environmental protection and technology industry supports more than 1.5 million American jobs.

We have all benefitted from the dedication and passion of EPA's workers, who for 40 years have followed a vision of healthier families, cleaner communities and a stronger America. The lessons of the last four decades are right now guiding our work on challenges like climate change and electronic waste pollution, and strengthening our continuing efforts on issues like environmental justice.

Thank you to Director Daniel Schrag and everyone at the Harvard University Center for the Environment for making this meeting possible. I'm proud to join the great thinkers, innovators, policy-shapers and history makers gathered here to reflect on 40 years of environmental progress and look ahead to the next 40 years and beyond.