National Standards for Coal-Fired Power Plants Will Clean Air, Protect Health, and Create Jobs

Washington, DC (Dec. 21, 2011)—Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, issued the following statement regarding today's announcement by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that it has issued the nation's first standards to reduce toxic pollution emitted from coal-fired power plants:

"These new standards, which have been twenty years in the making, will safeguard American families and protect our environment from dangerous mercury and toxic air pollution. I commend the EPA for finalizing rules that will prevent thousands of premature deaths and hundreds of thousand of heart attacks and other illnesses. These new national standards will create thousands of American jobs and generate health and economic benefits worth tens of billions of dollars."

Known as "Mercury and Air Toxics Standards" or the "MATS Rule," the provisions announced today will reduce dangerous pollutants emitted from power plants through the use of pollution control technology that is already widely available in the industry. More than half of coal-fired power plants in the United States report already using such technology to reduce pollutants.