

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Lisa Jackson  
EPA Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

April 28, 2009

Dear President Obama and EPA Administrator Jackson,

**As community members living in dioxin-impacted neighborhoods, indigenous groups, Vietnam Vets concerned about Agent Orange, and health-affected groups concerned about endometriosis, breast cancer, reproductive health, and learning and developmental disabilities, we are writing to implore you to cancel the Science Advisory Board's review of EPA's Dioxin Reassessment, release this long awaited report, and move ahead in setting dioxin policies that will protect the health of our communities and the American people.**

A municipal incinerator in Connecticut . . . a Dow chemical plant in Michigan . . . a medical waste incinerator in Florida. These are some of the ways dioxin, the most toxic man-made substance on earth, is produced and released into our communities. Every day, we continue to live with dioxin contamination in our neighborhoods, food, and bodies, while the EPA's Dioxin Reassessment study has been delayed for almost twenty years. As a result, we have been left to argue with our state agencies over how much cleanup is needed and what's a safe level of exposure.

Now, the EPA is proposing to form yet another scientific panel to review the dioxin report which will only delay the release of the report once again. According to the EPA's website, this next review will take until 2012 to complete. Enough is enough.

Dioxin is a byproduct of the manufacture and burning of products that contain chlorine. Plastics made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) are a major culprit. So is paper that is bleached with chlorine or chlorine compounds. Incinerators across the country belch out this toxic substance every single day. Airborne, dioxin falls on farms, settles on plants and works its way up the food chain. Dioxin also gets into water from industrial discharges. Dioxin is now pervasive in fish, beef, milk, poultry, pork and eggs. Infants are even exposed to dioxin in breast milk.

Dioxin has been ranked among the most dangerous of chemicals, a "known human carcinogen," by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). Dioxin has been linked to liver, lung, stomach, soft and connective tissue cancers as well as Non-Hodgkins lymphoma.

Learning disabilities, birth defects, male and female infertility, endometriosis and diabetes have all been linked to dioxin exposure. Dioxin weakens the human immune system and decreases the level of the

male hormone testosterone. It can disrupt the proper function of hormones -- chemical messengers that the body uses for growth and regulation.

The EPA was poised to warn Americans about dioxin in 1994. But under industry pressure, the agency postponed their report. Now, fifteen years later, under pressure from the chemical industry, that study has still not been released and our communities suffer as a result.

We have a right to air, water, soil and food free of dioxin. We the undersigned believe the public has a right to know about the health consequences of exposure to dioxin.

**We urge you to cancel the Science Advisory Board's review of EPA's Dioxin Reassessment, release this long awaited report, and move ahead in setting dioxin policies that will protect the health of the our communities and the American people.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Monique Harden and Nathalie Walker,  
Attorneys and Co-Directors  
Advocates for Environmental Human Rights  
New Orleans, LA

Pam Miller, Executive Director  
Alaska Community Action on Toxics  
Anchorage, AK

Laura Abulafia, MHS, Director, Environmental  
Health Initiative  
American Association on Intellectual and  
Developmental Disabilities (Formerly AAMR)  
Washington, DC

Betty Mekdeci, Executive Director  
Birth Defect Research for Children  
Celebration FL

David Mickey  
Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League  
Glendale Springs, North Carolina

Joyce Bichler, ACSW, Deputy Director  
Breast Cancer Action  
San Francisco, CA

Jeanne Rizzo, R.N., President and CEO  
The Breast Cancer Fund  
San Francisco, CA

Teresa Mills, Director  
Buckeye Environmental Network  
Columbus, OH

Bruce Wood, President  
BURNT  
Nashville, Tennessee

Steve Zeltzer, Chair  
California Coalition For Workers Memorial Day  
San Francisco, CA

Jane Williams, Executive Director  
California Communities Against Toxics  
Rosamond, CA

Lois Gibbs, Executive Director  
Center for Health, Environment and Justice  
Falls Church, VA

Barbara Warren, Executive Director  
Citizens' Environmental Coalition  
Albany, NY

Laurence Tunsill  
Citizens Organized For Environmental Justice  
Inc.

Caroline Snyder Ph.D.  
Citizens for Sludge-Free Land  
North Sandwich NH

Linda L. Young, Director  
Clean Water Network of FL  
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Jackie Elliott  
C.L.E.A.R.  
Claremont, NH

Tamara Maschino  
Clean Air Clean Lake  
TX

Sharyle Patton, Director, Biomonitoring  
Resource Center  
Commonweal  
Bolin, CA

Jana Chicoine, Spokesperson  
Concerned Citizens of Russell  
Russell MA

Mark A. Mitchell M.D., MPH, President  
Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice  
Hartford, CT

Becky Bornhorst  
Downwinders at Risk  
Dallas-Ft. Worth, Texas

Patricia Wiitanen, Executive Assistant  
Endometriosis Association  
Milwaukee, WI

Endometriosis Research Center  
Delray Beach, FL

Paul and Ellen Connett  
Fluoride Action Network  
Canton, NY

Monica Wilson, International Co-Coordinator  
GAIA: Global Alliance for Incinerator  
Alternatives/ Global Anti-Incinerator Alliance  
Berkeley, CA

Bill Owens, President  
Glynn Environmental Coalition  
Brunswick, GA

Bradley Angel, Executive Director  
Green Action  
San Francisco, CA

Laura Weinberg, President  
Great Neck Breast Cancer Coalition  
Great Neck, NY

Tracy Frisch  
Greenwich Citizens Committee, Inc.  
Greenwich, NY

Alan Muller, Executive Director  
Green Delaware  
Port Penn, DE

Brent Baeslack  
Haverhill Environmental League  
Haverhill, MA

Debra Hall, Founder  
Hopewell Junction Citizens for Clean Water  
Hopewell Junction, NY

Tom Goldtooth, Executive Director  
Indigenous Environmental Network  
Bemidji, MN

Ana Baptista  
Ironbound Community Corporation  
Newark, NJ

Sheila Buckley, Executive Director  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Pittsburgh, PA

Michelle Hurd Riddick  
Lone Tree Council  
Saginaw, MI

Terry Miller  
Lone Tree Council  
Bay City, MI

Mr. Edgar Mouton, President  
Mossville Environmental Action Now  
Westlake, LA

Nick Bennett, Staff Scientist  
Natural Resources Council of Maine  
Augusta, ME

Nancy Hone, Founder and Coordinator  
Neighbors Against the Burner  
St. Paul, MN

Rick Engler, Director  
NJ Work Environment Council  
Lawrenceville, NJ

Florence T. Robinson  
North Baton Rouge Environmental Assn.  
Baton Rouge, LA

Diane D'Arrigo, Radioactive Waste Project  
Director  
Nuclear Information and Resource Service  
Takoma Park, MD

Vivian Stockman, Project Coordinator  
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition  
Huntington, WV

Darlene Schanfald  
The Olympic Environmental Council  
Sequim, WA

Jane Harris, Executive Director  
Oregon Center for Environmental Health  
Portland, Oregon

Eden Brightspirit Hendrix, President  
P.E.A.C.H.-People for Environmental Action &  
Community Health  
Fresh Abundance LOCAL & Organic Foods  
Spokane, WA

E.M.T. O'Nan, Director  
Protect All Children's Environment  
Marion, NC

Shawna Larson  
Resisting Environmental Destruction on  
Indigenous Lands (REDOIL)  
Anchorage, AK

Judy Braiman  
RAMP (Rochesterians Against the Misuse of  
Pesticides)  
Rochester, NY

Alonzo Spencer  
Save Our County Inc  
East Liverpool, OH

Maureen Headington, President  
Stand Up/Save Lives Campaign  
Burr Ridge, Illinois

Joe Parrish  
US Environmental Watch  
Elizabeth, NJ, and New York, NY

Merle E. Ratner, Co-Coordinator  
Vietnam Agent Orange Relief & Responsibility  
Campaign  
New York, NY

Michael Eckstein, Chairman, Agent  
Orange/Dioxin Committee  
New Jersey State Council, Inc., Vietnam  
Veterans of America  
Stanhope, New Jersey

Robert Gronko and Joe Miller  
Vietnam Veterans Against the War  
Chicago, IL

Ogonnaya Dotson-Newman, Environmental  
Health and Community-Based Research  
Coordinator  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Inc. (WE  
ACT)  
New York, New York

Alexandra Scranton, Director of Science and  
Research  
Women's Voices for the Earth  
Missoula, MT

John Taylor  
Saginaw, MI

John Caulfield  
Santa Barbara, CA

CC: Nancy Sutley, Chair, the White House Council on Environmental Quality

Enclosure: Quotes from Dioxin-Impacted Communities