

DEBBIE DINGELL
12TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

116 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4071

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATION

HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON THE BUDGET

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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DISTRICT OFFICES:

19855 WEST OUTER DRIVE
SUITE 103-E
DEARBORN, MI 48124
(313) 278-2936

301 WEST MICHIGAN AVENUE
SUITE 400
YPSILANTI, MI 48197
(734) 481-1100

WEBSITE: DEBBIEDINGELL.HOUSE.GOV

The Honorable Keith Creagh
Director
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 30473
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Director Creagh:

The Flint water crisis has caused many citizens in Michigan and throughout the country to look closely at environmental issues in their own communities and to seek assurances that the water they drink, the air they breathe, and the communities that they live in are safe. Unfortunately, many people have lost their trust in government at all levels, and we have a responsibility to assure the citizens of Michigan that we are vigilantly monitoring all public health and environmental issues. Hopefully, we all appreciate and understand why we must do this.

As you are aware, the Mayor, City Council, numerous citizens, organizations and other elected officials in Ann Arbor have expressed concerns regarding the safety of the water in this community due to an unfortunate business practice from decades ago. This letter is to respectfully request that the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) finalize stricter cleanup standards for 1,4-dioxane that reduces the permissible level of this contaminant in groundwater from the current standard of 85 parts per billion. MDEQ has been working for years to simultaneously develop revised cleanup standards for not only 1,4-dioxane, but also over 300 other hazardous substances that are regulated by the state. EPA updated its findings on 1,4-dioxane in 2010 and Michigan is one of the last states to address this issue. These reviews should be completed as quickly as possible.

The current concerns in Ann Arbor stem from the use of an industrial solvent 1,4-dioxane by Gelman Sciences, now owned by Pall Life Sciences, which incorporated the chemical in its manufacturing of medical filters on Wagner Road in Scio Township. Between 1966 and 1986, wastewater containing 1,4-dioxane was sprayed on its lawns and stored in unlined lagoons that has seeped through soil and rock layers into the groundwater and begun to spread in an ever-growing plume.

As science has changed and new research has emerged over the years, a debate has ensued as to what level of 1,4-dioxane is considered safe. While efforts have been undertaken to ensure the safety of Ann Arbor's drinking water, it is important that we update our state's standards to reflect the latest science and use them to prevent any future adverse impact to their water supply. Given the fact that almost 85% of Ann Arbor's drinking water comes from the Huron River, the community deserves to have confidence that the 1,4-dioxane plume will not ultimately contaminate the city's primary drinking water source.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has classified 1,4-dioxane as "likely to be carcinogenic in humans by all routes of exposure" and has recommended lower standards for health-based drinking water guidance values. While the EPA has not issued federal drinking water standards with respect to 1,4-dioxane levels, Michigan's levels are currently among the highest in the country at 85

parts per billion while the lowest state standards are at 3 parts per billion. Michigan should be a leader in this area by reducing our levels to be more in line with the guidelines of other states and the EPA.

While I am assured that the drinking water in Ann Arbor is currently safe because of steps taken by the city and other stakeholders, we all have a responsibility to the citizens we serve to remain vigilant and to respond quickly when the scientific evidence suggests it is in the public's best interests to do so. Ann Arbor has implemented a local ordinance prohibiting the use of groundwater in the city as a precautionary measure, and they have closed several local wells over the years as a result. Lowering Michigan's standard for 1,4-dioxane is an important improvement and will give Ann Arbor, as well as MDEQ, another important tool to hold Pall Life Sciences accountable for the cleanup that they caused many years ago. It would also give citizens of the region greater confidence that every effort is being made to control this unfortunate contamination. We must all work together to control this situation and to prevent another situation like Flint from ever happening again.

The Ann Arbor community needs to understand when they can expect this rulemaking to lower the standards for 1,4-dioxane in groundwater to be finalized, as they have been anticipating it for some time. We urge you to do so as quickly as possible. We also need to continue to work with the Mayor, City Council, and other stakeholders in the region to assure them that the plume is being adequately monitored to prevent it from reaching their primary drinking water source. We are also copying Gina McCarthy, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, on this letter to request that they notify me and other local officials of any issues they are concerned about or aware of related to the safety of the drinking water in Ann Arbor.

Thank you for your understanding of the need to lower the state standard for 1,4-dioxane to reflect the latest science. The Ann Arbor community has been awaiting this action for some time and they need a clear understanding for when the proposed standard will be issued and the timing for final implementation. Please let me and other officials from this community how we might assist you in any way.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Cc: Gina McCarthy, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency