

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 17, 2023

Mr. Daniel Eichinger  
Acting Director  
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy  
Constitution Hall  
525 West Allegan Street  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Acting Director Eichinger,

We write to you to urgently request the reopening of the public comment period for the proposed approval of the Republic Industrial and Energy Services (RIES), LLC's hazardous waste operating license renewal application that the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is considering. Over the course of the last few weeks, it has become abundantly clear that the public was unable to properly provide input or properly express concerns with this site and the movement of hazardous waste into their communities.

On February 24, 2023, we were all alarmed to learn that Norfolk Southern and Republic Industrial and Energy Services had reached an agreement to dispose of toxic waste from East Palestine, Ohio at the disposal site in Romulus, Michigan without notification of local authorities and elected officials. Working closely with the Governor's office, EGLE officials, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, we were able to act quickly to halt further shipments and return truckloads of hazardous waste to Ohio. But this experience has clearly demonstrated that there is an urgent need for further public discourse about how and where we dispose of toxic and hazardous waste. Debate about the permitting of this site has continued for decades as former Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. led efforts to oppose this facility, and we remain concerned to this day about the health and environmental risks posed by its continued operation in Romulus in the surrounding region.

In the following days, we also learned that RIES had applied for a license renewal for the facility in Romulus and that the public comment period had closed. Though some state elected officials were informed about the public hearing, many of the first responders who are most impacted by the renewal application were not aware and not able to provide comment. The renewal process for a facility as controversial as RIES must include robust public discussion and debate, and that was not provided over the last few months. Notification of public comment periods and public hearings on topics this controversial must be widespread and must include a more comprehensive outreach strategy engaging all local leaders in the surrounding region.

We strongly urge EGLE to reopen and extend the public comment period for this facility, as well as hold another public hearing on its approval with a stronger communication plan for the Romulus community and surrounding region. Our communities deserve to be fully informed and have the opportunity to express their concerns before a final decision is made. Thank you for your attention in this important matter and consideration of our urgent request. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress