



State of West Virginia
Office of the Attorney General

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March 18, 2015

VIA MAIL

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chair
Committee on Environment & Public Works
U.S. Senate
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment & Public Works
U.S. Senate
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 697, the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act

Dear Chairman Inhofe and Ranking Member Boxer,

Last year I wrote to the Committee leadership and expressed my support for the Chemical Safety Improvement Act pending before Committee on Environment & Public Works, which served to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). Today, I write to renew my call for reforms and improvements to the TSCA and to express my support for S. 697, the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act. I believe this bipartisan bill is a significant step in the right direction toward protecting the American public from unsafe chemicals and I urge you to continue your consideration of it.

One of the flaws in the TSCA is that it allows approximately 62,000 pre-existing chemicals to be "grandfathered" without any tests to indicate what, if any, threat these substances may pose the public. You will recall that last year the State of West Virginia had the misfortune of experiencing the consequences of this regulatory gap firsthand, when 75,000 gallons of 4-methylcyclohexanemethanol (MCHM) contaminated the water supply in nine West Virginia counties. We were alarmed to learn that very little information existed about the health risks of exposure to this chemical. This is unacceptable and must never happen.

S. 697 takes steps to ensure that no other community will have to experience the same angst that my constituents felt in the aftermath of the chemical spill. This bill establishes a framework for the systematic evaluation of *all* active chemicals and requires additional safety reviews of high-priority substances. It also streamlines the process of gathering the information necessary to determine whether a chemical is safe for its intended use, identifies and acts on

chemicals that may pose safety concerns, and ensures that necessary information concerning a chemical be shared with public officials and first responders in the event of an emergency.

In short, S. 697 is a needed improvement to the current chemical regulatory framework. I strongly support your continued consideration of this important reform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Morrissey". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Patrick Morrissey
West Virginia Attorney General