

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

May 11, 2018

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

We write to request that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) use its full authority under the *Clean Air Act* to enforce strong public health standards. We are concerned that the EPA has failed to consistently require companies to monitor and test their air emissions for manganese air pollution—a known neurotoxin—on the Southeast side of Chicago.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, high levels of manganese dust exposure can cause serious neurological effects, learning difficulties, and memory loss. Namely, recent studies demonstrate a link between manganese exposure and lower child IQ scores. That is why we are deeply concerned that research conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago's School of Public Health found that children in Southeast Chicago have higher levels of manganese in their toenails than children in other parts of the City.

Our constituents are particularly concerned about the lack of filter-based monitors for manganese emitters on the Southeast side of Chicago. Even though the City of Chicago has approved updated zoning rules prohibiting new facilities from storing or handling manganese, only the EPA has the authority to require companies to install filter-based monitors that measure the surrounding communities' exposure to toxic metals.

An article in *the New York Times* highlighted that in the first five months of 2017 investigators sent 14 requests requiring monitoring or testing using the EPA's *Clean Air Act* authority, similar to the same time period in 2016. However, in the five months after, only one request was sent. This lack of consistent enforcement is bad for human health and the environment, and is unfair to businesses in the area.

EPA must fulfill its mission to protect the public from harmful pollution. Therefore, we urge the EPA to equitably enforce the law by requiring other facilities that may be contributing to higher levels of manganese pollution to install filter-based monitors.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



RICHARD J. DURBIN
United States Senator



TAMMY DUCKWORTH
United States Senator



ROBIN L. KELLY
Member of Congress

Cc: Cathy Stepp, Regional Administrator for Environmental Protection Agency Region 5