

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 29, 2020

Mr. John Brett
President and CEO of ArcelorMittal USA
ArcelorMittal Chicago HQ
1 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Mr. Brett:

A recent *Post-Tribune* story revealed your facility's attempt to cover up the leaking of toxic chemicals into the Little Calumet River and Lake Michigan. This is not only a likely violation of federal law, but it calls into question the integrity of your facility's self-reported data—vital information used to protect the critical ecosystems in nearby waters. As Illinois Senators who represent Lake Michigan and the many constituents affected by this pollution, we call on you to work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) to effectively address your serial pollution issues, and to take actions to ensure the protection of Lake Michigan and its watershed.

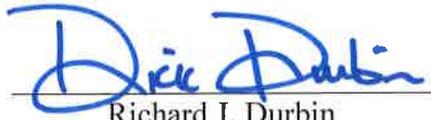
After a blast furnace wastewater failure this past summer, your facility released cyanide and ammonia into the Little Calumet River and Lake Michigan, killing more than 3,000 fish, causing delays to the operations at a water treatment plant, and forcing the National Park Service to close two beaches. Disturbingly, your facility failed to immediately alert public officials of the spill. Worse still, IDEM has indicated that, following the spill, ArcelorMittal attempted to revise required water testing when the initial results proved too damaging. These tests are meant to assess the safety of the facility's operations and help inform a plan of action, including any necessary actions to protect the public health. By misleading regulators about the results, ArcelorMittal has not only likely violated federal law, but it has jeopardized the public health of local residents and compounded the severity of your original wrongdoing.

Based on this and other IDEM records, your company has exhibited a recurring, objectionable pattern of environmental and public health violations. By falsifying your tests, your company has lied to state and federal regulators, and let down all those who value the Lake Michigan watershed.

We urge you to take financial responsibility for your facility's Clean Water Act violations and permit's reporting and notification requirements, ensure that proper testing procedures and operating protocols are followed, and work closely with both IDEM and U.S. EPA to prevent a recurrence of this damaging pollution in the future.

Anything short of this is unacceptable. ArcelorMittal must begin to earn back the trust of their neighbors and those who rely on our waterways, but that cannot happen unless and until ArcelorMittal takes corrective, decisive action.

Sincerely,


Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator


Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator