

CEDRIC L. RICHMOND  
2ND DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

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ASSISTANT TO THE MAJORITY WHIP

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1802**

January 6, 2020

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The Honorable Ken McQueen  
Regional Administrator – Region 6  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500  
Dallas, TX 75270

The Honorable Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.  
Secretary  
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
602 N. Fifth Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Administrator McQueen and Secretary Brown,

I write to commend the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) decision to implement a new air quality data collection system for the Denka Performance Elastomer plant and to reiterate the importance of closely monitoring dangerously high chloroprene emissions moving forward. Louisiana has long been an economic engine for the country due to its geography and vast natural resources. Products manufactured in Louisiana are used by companies across the globe and spur economic growth across the country. Many of these goods are produced in plants located along the Mississippi River and play an integral role in bolstering the State's economy, as well as creating good-paying jobs for our residents. However, with that production comes adverse consequences that must be addressed to protect the safety of river parish communities.

As a result of such a heavy concentration of production, Louisiana has been disproportionately affected by the detrimental environmental effects of plant emissions. While economic vitality is important, it cannot ignore the reality of deteriorating air quality and the health risks it poses. For far too many years, people in communities along the Mississippi River have repeatedly expressed these very concerns which has prompted the federal government to intervene in the absence of action.

With the recent announcement of a new phase of air monitoring around the Denka facility, I am requesting that a community meeting be convened to explain the new air quality monitoring program. Considering the community's lack of trust in Denka, they must be able to trust the accuracy and results of this change. Providing such a forum will give community stakeholders an opportunity to get the answers they deserve. Specifically, it is imperative for them to know what this new data collection practice is expected to achieve and what next steps will be taken moving forward.

I believe that continued monitoring and engagement on this issue will benefit the people of Louisiana and facilitate dialogue and action in the interest of improved environmental and public health outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. L. Richmond', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Cedric L. Richmond**