

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

July 15, 2021

The Honorable Rochelle P. Walensky, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Director Walensky:

Thank you for your leadership at the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We recognize that your work at ATSDR is no less critical than your work at CDC for protecting public health and keeping Americans informed about potential threats. Thus, as representatives of Lake County, Illinois, we write to emphasize the urgency of the county's request for a thorough, timely health consultation report and assessment of the risk posed by ethylene oxide (EtO) emissions in our community.

As you know, since the 2018 National Air Toxics Assessment revealed potentially elevated risk from EtO in our area, our constituents have been rightly concerned about whether the air they breathe is safe. We have worked in Congress to address these concerns as swiftly as possible by introducing legislation to tighten protections against EtO emissions, by pushing for funding for ambient air monitoring in EtO-affected communities, and by holding the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) accountable to its statutory and moral obligation to implement and enforce strong EtO regulations.

ATSDR also has an essential role to play in both assessing and communicating the risks faced by our constituents. ATSDR's 2018 Letter Health Consultation for Willowbrook, Illinois informed residents and local leaders about the dangers posed by elevated ambient EtO levels in their area and was followed by a comprehensive analysis of new air monitoring data. Our constituents in Lake County deserve the same level of federal support afforded to Willowbrook, in a timely manner appropriate for the urgency of the health risks involved.

We realize that ATSDR's consultation for Lake County has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as data quality concerns. However, we want to reiterate the importance of completing a comprehensive report as quickly as possible. If we can be of assistance in disseminating ATSDR's findings and engaging our community, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We ask that you keep us and our staff updated on the timeline for ATSDR's consultation. Thank you for your efficient and conscientious work on this urgent issue facing our community.

Sincerely,

Lauren Underwood  
Member of Congress

Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator

Bradley S. Schneider  
Member of Congress

Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

Sean Casten  
Member of Congress

