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February 6, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman, Science, Space, and Technology Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Via Fax: 202-225-8628

Dear Chairman Smith,

I live in San Marcos, Texas and in your congressional district. I am writing to express my frustration with your continued attacks on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). I am disappointed that you have schedule a hearing for tomorrow, ill-titled "Making EPA Great Again." Not only is the hearing a waste of taxpayer funds, but you've designed it to spread misinformation about the scientific information and processes used by the EPA.

The mission of the EPA is to protect human health and the environment from hazards. The laws passed by Congress for the EPA to implement have made enormous improvements in the air we breathe, the water we drink and recreate, and the soil in which we grow food, build, and play. To suggest that EPA has not been effective or instrumental in these accomplishments is fiction.

Asbestos is a known human carcinogen. Its deadly toll on families and communities is enormous, yet imports of the deadly mineral into the U.S. continue still today. Industries and powerful interests continue to engage in campaigns to undermine the science about asbestos, as well as about many other toxic substances. EPA is the federal agency established to protect the public from hazards in our environment. The scientists and other staff at EPA can only fulfill this vital responsibility if Congress funds the agency sufficiently and supports it when the Agency enforces the regulations it has developed to protect us from environmental hazards.

I have the honor of a formal affiliation with the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAAS), serving as a liaison to its Science Advisory Board and its Prevention Board. ADAAS joins me in urging you to uphold the mission and vision of EPA, instead of attempting to eviscerate the agency.

Sincerely,

Celeste Monforton, DrPH, MPH
*Lecturer, Department of Health & Human Performance
Texas State University*

CC: The Honorable Eddie Johnson, Ranking Member, Science, Space, and Technology Committee, U.S. House of Representatives