

September 29, 2017

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chair
Committee on Environment and Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thomas Carper
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations committed to improving maternal and child health across our Nation, we are writing to urge you to ensure the Director of the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) vigorously upholds the mission of the office to protect individuals, families, and the environment from potential risks from pesticides and toxic chemicals.ⁱ

Our organizations are dedicated to the advancement of women's and children's health and improved health outcomes. The ideal outcome of pregnancy is not simply a healthy newborn, but a human being optimally programmed for health across the lifespan. Harmful chemicals can cross the placenta, and in some cases can accumulate in the fetus, resulting in disproportionate fetal exposure. Robust scientific evidence has emerged over the past several years demonstrating that preconception and prenatal environmental exposures can have a profound and lasting impact on health across the life course. In addition, as infants and children grow and mature, their unique physiologic, developmental, and behavioral differences make them especially vulnerable to chemical exposures during critical windows of development.

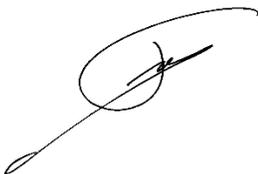
It is with these concerns in mind that we propose the following joint principles that the Director of OCSPP should pledge to follow:

- Prioritize the protection of vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, infants, and children;
- Demonstrate an unimpeachable commitment to the health of the public over the interests of industry;
- Implement fully and promptly the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act (Public Law No. 114-182), consistent with congressional intent; and
- Defend existing pesticide and toxic chemical safety standards that protect the public health.

The Director of OCSPP holds immense responsibility for the protection of the public's health. The Committee on Environment and Public Works has the duty of thoroughly vetting the nominee, and we encourage you to carefully evaluate the nominee to ensure his or her willingness and fitness to undertake and uphold the standards of the office.

We hope that careful consideration will be given to our concerns, and that the health of vulnerable populations is uppermost during the nomination process. For any questions please contact Ami Gadhia, American Academy of Pediatrics, at agadhia@aap.org, Rachel Tetlow, American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, at rtetlow@acog.org, and Jaimie Vickery, March of Dimes, at jvickery@marchofdimes.org.

Sincerely,



Fernando Stein, MD, FAAP
President
American Academy of Pediatrics



Haywood L. Brown, MD, FACOG
President
American Congress of
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Stacey D. Stewart
President
March of Dimes

ⁱ Environmental Protection Agency. About the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP). <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/about-office-chemical-safety-and-pollution-prevention-ocspp> Accessed September 14, 2017.