Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 27, 2005

Dear Administrator Skinner:

We are writing to urge the Environmental Protection Agency to take immediate action to remediate the additional PCB contamination that has been discovered in St. Clair Shores, Michigan.

In 2002, EPA completed an assessment of the high PCB levels that were discovered in the Ten Mile Drain system as well as two adjacent canals in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. At that time, an investigation of the contamination conducted by EPA and its Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team concluded that the likely source of the PCB contamination was illegal dumping of PCBs into a catch basin or storm sewer near the northwestern corner of the Ten Mile Drain system. Following the investigation and site assessment, EPA initiated a time-critical removal of the PCBs from the Drain and the canals, which was completed in 2004.

We greatly appreciate your personal efforts, as well as those of EPA, to address the PCB contamination in the Ten Mile Drain system and canals; unfortunately, extremely high levels of PCBs have again been found in the Drain. Samples from several different locations in the Drain have been tested, and PCB concentrations of up to 200,000 parts-per-million have been found. This is 4000 times the hazardous level. Further, these tests revealed that the PCB contamination was not the result of an illegal one-time dumping into the Ten Mile Drain; rather, the PCBs continue to seep into the Ten Mile Drain from an area near the intersection of Harper and Bon Brae Streets.

On October 20, Weston Solutions presented a feasibility study to determine the best way to address the PCB contamination. The study was commissioned by EPA and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Representatives of our offices attended the meeting with Jeff Kimble of EPA Region 5 to discuss the findings of the report.

The underlying danger to the residents who live nearby and use the canal is still significant. We strongly believe the next step must be for EPA to complete its PCB cleanup effort and to mobilize a removal action that addresses the PCBs at their source as well as the re-contamination of the Ten Mile Drain system. Unless effective action is taken in the near future, the renewed PCB contamination could completely undo EPA's previous cleanup efforts and leave a significant human health and environmental threat unabated.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Carl Levin
United States Senator

Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress