Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 21, 2018

Via Electronic Delivery

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Acting Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Cathy Stepp
Region 5 Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
77 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

Dear Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler and Administrator Stepp:

We write to request that the U.S. Environmental Protecting Agency (EPA) conduct ambient air testing near the Sterigenics facility in Willowbrook, Illinois, make monitoring data open and accessible to the community, and expedite testing a scrubber that was recently installed on the back-vent of the facility. We also request information regarding a document that was intended to provide context to Willowbrook residents on the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR) report that was abruptly removed from EPA's website.

As you know, a recent investigation was conducted by ATSDR, a division of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), on the air quality in Willowbrook, Illinois. In a report publishing its findings, ATSDR stated, "If measured and modeled data represent typical Ethylene Oxide ambient concentrations in ambient air, an elevated cancer risk exists for residents and off-site workers in the Willowbrook community surrounding the Sterigenics facility. These evaluated risks present a public health hazard to these populations."

ATSDR's report uses measured and modeled data to predict exposure risk. To that end, it is critical that EPA assists the community in understanding whether the modeled data is indeed representative of the community's exposure conditions. EPA must provide monitoring of the ambient air at the facility and ensure that data is publicly accessible. This transparency will help Willowbrook residents and workers at the facility determine whether a public health risk exists. Furthermore, in light of ATSDR's report and EPA's characterization of ethylene oxide as a known carcinogen, we ask that monitoring be conducted for all facilities across the country using this chemical.

Earlier this year, Sterigenics took some proactive steps to reduce its levels of fugitive ethylene oxide emissions. Specifically, Sterigenics connected its back-vent to an internal scrubber. The company estimates that this step will lead to less than one percent of the ethylene oxide used at the facility escaping into the community. It has requested that EPA work with Illinois EPA on

administering and analyzing the tests necessary to confirm these estimates. We ask that you give expedited consideration to this request.

In addition to accessing EPA's data and being reassured that the steps already taken will mitigate ethylene oxide exposure, the public needs to understand the context of ATSDR's report and its findings. We are alarmed that a document explaining the report was on the EPA Region 5 website was abruptly taken down. We request an explanation for why this decision was made, and who made the decision. The lack of context has led to confusion, anxiety, and hardship on both the part of the community and Sterigenics.

Thank you for considering our requests.

Sincerely,

Tammy Duckworth	Richard J. Durbin	Bill Foster
United States Senator	United States Senator	United States Representative