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United States Senate

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April 19, 2018

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

I write in light of concerns I have heard from local residents and community leaders in Lincoln County, Montana regarding residential cleanup at the Libby Asbestos Superfund site. Montanans are anxious to ensure that local government entities or homeowners themselves are not held liable for cleanup costs associated with any subsequent asbestos exposure under the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) forthcoming plan for operation and maintenance (O&M).

More specifically, my constituents have a strong desire to have their input taken into account in the development of EPA's O&M plan for the site, which includes roughly 2,500 properties in Libby and Troy that have undergone asbestos remediation. While EPA and W.R. Grace, the potentially responsible party, have covered the cost and implementation of mitigation work to date, risk of exposure remains. If a building is demolished or renovated, for example, those in the surrounding area may be exposed to asbestos. The communities of Libby and Troy, as well as Lincoln County, operate on tight budgets and covering the cost of future residential exposure would prove to be a significant hardship. Given the robust funds that already exist for purposes of cleanup, I trust that you can reach common ground on a plan for resolution of such scenarios should they arise.

I would also like to reiterate my appreciation for EPA including this site among your Superfund redevelopment focus list. This is the kind of targeted attention that will enable us to return sites like this one to reuse for the economic benefit of the local community.

Montanans deserve to live in a clean environment and should not be forced to bear the brunt of shortcomings in the Superfund cleanup process. I urge you to work with Lincoln County's local residents and elected officials to develop a mutually agreeable O&M plan.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Steve Daines

STEVE DAINES
United States Senator