CHARLES E. SCHUMER
NEW YORK

DEMOCRATIC LEADER

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 27, 2017

Administrator Scott Pruitt
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

Following recent reports of state records that indicate that radium and other radioactive materials were handled at the Northrop Grumman/US Navy manufacturing site in Bethpage, which may be linked to previously detected occurrences of radium in drinking water and groundwater in nearby wells, I write to urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to immediately use its preeminent technical expertise and any available resources to assist state and local officials to conduct a complete analysis of all potential present and historical sources of radioactive materials on the site. EPA should quickly assist the community and state regulators in testing for additional radium (and tritium, polonium, uranium, and other radioactive isotopes), and in doing a top-to-bottom review of the Grumman building, Plant 26, where the radioactive materials were reportedly tested and handled, and the entire Northrop Grumman/Navy site.

As you know, the Bethpage Water District was forced to shut down one of its drinking supply wells in 2013 after elevated levels of radium were detected there. Then, earlier this month, it was reported that elevated levels of radium were detected in water samples from shallow groundwater monitoring wells on the Bethpage High School Campus, which is directly across the street from the Bethpage Community Park. The park was once part of a more than 600-acre complex where the Navy and the company now known as Northrop Grumman disposed of waste and other contaminants from operations associated with developing, testing, and manufacturing airplanes and space exploration aircraft. According to a document filed state environmental officials and described in media reports, radium, tritium, polonium, uranium, and other radioactive isotopes were handled at the Northrop Grumman/Navy site in Bethpage. In a letter response the company sent to me earlier this month, Northrop Grumman stated that they investigated the use of radionuclides in their operations in 2016, at the request of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and "did not identify any releases of radioactive materials." The company, however, did not answer my question as to whether they had used, store, or disposed of any radioactive materials at the site. I hope that the EPA can ferret out a more thorough and complete answer to this pressing question.

The source of the alarming levels of radium recently detected must be identified as soon as possible so any appropriate remedial and defensive actions can be undertaken to protect the public health and environment. As the preeminent environmental enforcement entity in the nation, EPA is best poised to provide support, technical assistance and, where possible, resources to determine the source of the radiation and help state and local entities map out the extent of any potential history of the handling of radioactive materials at the site. With the EPA's technical expertise and

experience, I request that you immediately provide support to help the community investigate the full scope of the problem and assist with any subsequent remediation as quickly as possible.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this critical matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator