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May 7, 2021

Michael S. Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Administrator, Mail Code 1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan:

We are writing to urge the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assess the dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT) damage off the coast of Catalina Island in California, and to expedite the cleanup of this serious threat to health and the environment.

Scientists have recently discovered evidence of more than 27,000 barrels DDT dumped on the ocean floor between Palos Verdes and Catalina Island off the California coast. Historical shipping logs show that the Montrose Chemical Corporation (Montrose) dumped more than 2,000 barrels of DDT-contaminated sludge every month into the ocean. DDT is infamous for its devastating environmental health impacts and was banned by the EPA in 1989.

It has long been known that the Montrose discharged DDT, polychlorinatedbiphenyls (PCBs), and other toxic chemicals into the environment. Montrose manufactured DDT from 1947 until 1982 at a 13-acre plant located in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County (County) know as Harbor Gateway area. As a result, the former plant property, surrounding areas, and groundwater were contaminated with DDT. This included impacts to County sewers that emptied into the Pacific Ocean. In 1989, the EPA identified the area around the former Montrose plant and the Palos Verdes shelf as a Superfund site. State and Federal agencies reached a $140.0 million settlement in 2001 with Montrose, which included paying for the restoration of the Palos Verdes reef. Cleanup is still ongoing; however, the Superfund site did not include the recently discovered, massive underground dump site of DDT barrels off the coast of Catalina Island.

To help address this problem, California State Assemblymember Patrick O' Donnell introduced Assembly Joint Resolution (AJR) 2, which calls on Congress and the EPA to act on the recently discovered DDT waste dump off the shores of Catalina Island. The

County supports Assemblymember O'Donnell's efforts and is urging Federal regulators to act swiftly to take all necessary steps to assess the extent of environmental impacts and cleanup the contaminated areas.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

HILDA L. SOLIS
Chair of the Board
Supervisor, First District

HOLLY J. MITCHELL
Supervisor, Second District

SHEILA KUEHL
Supervisor, Third District

JANICE HAHN
Supervisor, Fourth District

KATHRYN BARGER
Supervisor, Fifth District

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