

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 29, 2010

Judith Enck
Regional Administrator, Region 2
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
290 Broadway
New York, New York 10007-1866

Pete Grannis
Commissioner
NYS Department of Environmental
Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-1011

Dear Regional Administrator Enck and Commissioner Grannis:

We have closely followed the debate surrounding the proposed remedy to address the pollution at the Onondaga Lake Bottom Site. Pursuant to a Record of Decision (ROD) issued by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), contaminated sediments are to be hydraulically dredged from the lake bottom and pumped to a proposed Sediment Containment Area (SCA) located at a waste disposal area known as Wastedbed 13 in the Town of Camillus.

We appreciate the hard work and dedication of the DEC, the EPA, Honeywell, and members of the community. There remains, however, a great deal of anxiety among members of the community with respect to the proposed site, which is situated near newer developments and neighborhoods. We have watched and listened as staff from Honeywell, the DEC, and the EPA have answered questions and concerns over these past several months; but, there are still many questions that need to be addressed and new issues that have been raised. One only has to attend any town meeting or forum to understand the emotions this project engenders among residents.

We are empathetic with families who do not want a hazardous waste placed in a site near their neighborhood, and that is the position of many of the residents in developments surrounding Wastedbed 13. One of the main reasons for choosing the Wastedbed 13 site was that it was located in a relatively remote area, with few houses and developments nearby. In the last six years, that has changed and newer developments are now close by with residents who had little chance to have their voices heard in this process. Given this fact, it is time for both the EPA and DEC to seriously evaluate alternatives and allow local residents and community members a chance to present real alternatives. They have given every indication that they want to be a strong partner in this process.

As elected representatives, we feel that instead of moving forward in a fashion that will create animosity and ill will, **it is important to delay the implementation for the next 6 months and evaluate other proposals and new green technologies** that could benefit the lake as a whole and be a model for how to approach these issues in the future. Technology is continually and rapidly evolving. Who could have envisioned the green technologies that Onondaga County is newly employing to address its wastewater issues just a few short years ago? It is possible that time and renewed community energy will produce similar results with respect to the contaminated sediments in Onondaga Lake.

Whatever the outcome, it is important to take the time to fully, honestly, and openly evaluate any new information or technologies to ensure that we are pursuing the best possible plan. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to further dialogue as this process progresses.

Sincerely,


Daniel B. Maffei Charles Schumer Kirsten E. Gillibrand
Member of Congress United States Senator United States Senator