

The Honorable Slade Gorton
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gorton:

Thank you for your letter of April 13, 1999 which requests a response to your constituent, Mr. Mike Buckland, who is expressing a concern about labeling zinc as a persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) chemical. As you may know, zinc appeared as one of 53 chemicals proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for inclusion on the Draft Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) PBT List. This Draft List, when final, will serve as the focus of the Agency's voluntary waste minimization initiatives. The Draft List was released for public comment on November 9, 1998, and the public comment period closed on February 16, 1999. Zinc was included on the proposed list because of its potential for ecosystems impacts, such as toxicity to fish in surface waters.

We have received a number of public comments expressing concerns similar to those of your constituent regarding the placement of zinc and other metals on the Draft List. We also met with representatives from a number of metals trade associations and individual companies during the public comment period to hear their concerns regarding this issue. Let me assure you that we will review these comments carefully before deciding whether to include zinc on the Final RCRA List.

Again, thank you for providing us this opportunity to respond to your constituent, Mr. Buckland, on this matter. If you would like more information on the RCRA PBT List, please have your staff contact David Carver of my staff at (703) 308-8603.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Cotsworth, Acting Director
Office of Solid Waste

cc: Kari Vander Stoep

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