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Statement
by
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U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD
Dioxin Review Panel
Public Meeting, July 13-15, 2010
Hilton Washington Embassy Row
2015 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

July 13, 2010

My name is Azita Mashayekhi and I am an industrial hygienist representing the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, a union of 1.4 million members and 600,000 retirees. There are nearly 500 Teamster affiliate Local Unions throughout the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico.

We are gratified to have the opportunity at this public meeting to speak to The Dioxin Review Panel regarding its review of EPA's "Reanalysis of Key Issues Related to Dioxin Toxicity and Response to NAS [National Academies of Sciences] Comments."

We are also signing on to the letter from the Center for Health, Environment & Justice (CHEJ), and over 2000 individuals and organizations, presented by Mike Schade this morning.

Dioxin is one of the most toxic and well-studied, chemicals known to man, and Teamster members, who work in a variety of industries identified by the EPA and other health and safety agencies, are exposed to it on a daily basis, both in the workplace, and in the food that we all eat. The Teamsters Solid Waste, Recycling and Related Industries Division currently represents about 30,000 members. The disposal of solid waste in incinerators and from accidental landfill fires are some of the largest sources of dioxin in this country.

We applaud the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for finalizing and releasing its response to the National Academies of Sciences report on dioxin, *Health Risks from Dioxin and Related Compounds: Evaluation of the EPA Reassessment*. For the most part, the agency has done a very good job of defending its decisions and providing a transparent explanation of how and why they made their decisions. The final report, and related dose-response data, will pave the way for other regulatory and research health and safety agencies, namely the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), to also establish appropriate occupational exposure limits.

For over 20 years, however, the EPA's Dioxin Reassessment has been delayed, and American workers and families continue to suffer. Teamster members and retirees have continued to be exposed to potentially unsafe levels of dioxin in the food we all eat. This is unconscionable.

Given the state of the science, the Teamsters fully support EPA's decision to continue classifying dioxin as a known carcinogen. Dioxin has been classified as a known carcinogen by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Toxicology Program. Dioxin is generally considered the most potent man-made carcinogen ever tested.

We urge the EPA's Science Advisory Board to act as quickly as possible so the EPA can meet its 2010 deadline for finalizing and releasing the dioxin reassessment and move forward in developing appropriate regulations to protect the public from exposure to dioxin.

On behalf of the Teamsters Union, and especially those members who are directly affected by your work, we thank you for the opportunity to present these comments to you today.