

April 7, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Interior and Environment Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Interior and Environment Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

We urge you to support the Chemical Safety Board (CSB), which is under threat of proposed elimination in the President's fiscal year 2018 (FY18) budget. As you work to craft the FY18 Interior-Environment appropriations bill, we encourage you to support the CSB's critical mission and level fund it with fiscal year 2016 at a minimum of \$11 million.

The President's proposed budget states: "A budget that puts America first must make the safety of our people its number one priority – because without safety, there can be no prosperity." We concur. Of the 19 agencies proposed for elimination, the CSB is the only one with a safety mandate. Created by the Clean Air Act Amendments in 1990, the CSB provides a unique public safety function by comprehensively and scientifically investigating major chemical incidents and sharing findings broadly across industries to prevent future incidents. It has no regulatory authority but enables safety improvements and learning through its recommendations. This position provides greater latitude and incentive for the full range of stakeholders and parties to an incident to collaborate fully and freely with investigators. After each investigation the CSB issues recommendations to all parties, including industry and government.

The agency has investigated more than 130 major chemical incidents and issued 788 safety recommendations, 78% of which have been closed. Sound, technically precise recommendations prevent incident reoccurrences and protect American workers and welfare. The investigations and recommendations are transparent, with on-scene press briefings and public hearings as well as investigative materials available online. This accessibility allows for anyone to learn from the investigation throughout the process.

The CSB's products (recommendations, safety reports, bulletins, and videos) are used and cited by the industrial community, academia, professional associations, first responders, labor, and community leaders. Of particular note are the agency's exceptionally well-received videos explaining individual incidents. The CSB's portfolio of 68 video products has received 6.4 million views and the agency's YouTube channel has nearly 20,000 followers.

The CSB is able to do all of this with a budget of \$11 million and a staff of 40, which has remained relatively flat for nine years.

In order to keep Americans safe, we respectfully request that you, at a minimum, continue to fund CSB at \$11 million for FY18. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN)

American Chemical Society (ACS)

American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)

American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE)

Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP)

Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES)

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

National Safety Council (NSC)

ORCHSE Strategies, LLC

Prevention Institute