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Government
Advisory
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The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy,

The Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) appreciates the opportunity to work with the EPA to address issues that affect environmental justice (EJ) communities across the nation. At this time, the LGAC would like to present a report titled *EJ Best Practices for Local Governments* (See enclosed report). This report highlights the best practices that our communities have taken to address EJ issues. A brief overview of major EJ issues is presented, along with a series of case studies that illustrate local government efforts to address these issues in our communities. Also included is a set of recommendations for the EPA to consider pertaining to environmental justice.

The LGAC understands that EJ communities face many challenges when it comes to human health and the environment. Indeed, EJ communities are impacted more by environmental damage and health disparities than other communities. The LGAC would like to highlight the following findings:

- EJ communities need a forum to discuss and collaborate on solutions
- EJ communities need access to resources to address community problems
- EJ communities lack the basic infrastructure for clean drinking water, stormwater, wastewater, and utilities to meet citizen needs and promote economic prosperity

Residents in low-income, minority, and rural communities have had to bear the burden of health disparities and environmental damage, as well as the cumulative risks to health. In many cases the affected communities did not have the resources- political,

financial, or otherwise- to protect fellow citizens from harm. The LGAC believes that by understanding the needs of these specific communities and collaborating with the right agencies to target community-specific problems, local governments can ensure that no community is left behind, regardless of size, demographic makeup, or per-capita income. Furthermore, the actions that local governments take today can put an end to the environmental injustices that have, for so long, plagued residents in minority, low-income, and rural communities.

The LGAC further recommends that the *EJ Best Practices for Local Government* to serve as a resource guide for other local governments to address EJ issues in their communities. The case studies highlight actions taken by us that have effectively enriched communities and promoted more economic prosperity. The LGAC recommends that this report be published on EPA's website and be distributed to EPA regional offices to increase accessibility to this resource. The LGAC also believes that Plan EJ 2014 was successful in furthering our intergovernmental partnership by setting forth a clear set of strategic goals and a statement of concrete actions the agency will take to address environmental and public health disparities over a multi-year period. Therefore, the LGAC recommends that the EPA consider drafting a comprehensive blue print for advancing environmental justice, particularly identifying and outlining steps to follow Plan EJ 2014.

The LGAC once again thanks the Administrator for the opportunity to work together on EJ related issues and for the opportunity to present this report.

Sincerely,



Mayor Bob Dixon
Chair



Mayor Lisa Wong
Chairwoman, Environmental Justice
(EJ) Workgroup



Commissioner Robert Cope
Chair, Small Community Advisory
Subcommittee (SCAS)

Enclosure