

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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July 25, 2022

Michael Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Billy Nolen
Interim Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Administrator Regan and Interim Administrator Nolen:

This Thursday, July 28th at 2 pm ET, I am holding a hearing in my House Oversight Subcommittee on the Environment on how leaded aviation fuel poisons community members -- especially children -- with toxic lead pollution.

For over a month, my staff has been working with yours to secure your participation at this hearing. We were told you are unavailable, so we offered to let the Deputy Administrators or other senior officials testify as a compromise. This option was rejected. To try and further accommodate you, we offered to change the scope of the hearing so that both your agencies would be comfortable testifying. Unfortunately, both your agencies are flatly refusing to cooperate in any way with this hearing that is going forward next Thursday.

The leaded fuel used by piston-engine aircrafts is the last remaining leaded transportation fuel in the United States and accounts for 70% of lead air pollution nationwide. Approximately 160,000 children attend school near an airport facility in the United States using leaded aviation fuel, including in my district. A recent study at an airport that impacts my district analyzed 17,000 blood samples from children. It found results comparable to the 2014 Flint Water Crisis.

Lead is a toxic poison. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention agree that there is *no safe level* of lead exposure for children. Lead is highly poisonous, causing a variety of adverse health effects, even at low doses,

including brain damage, learning and behavior problems, lower IQ levels, and increased blood pressure.

I understand the sensitivities associated with testimony on this issue at a time when the EPA is still considering whether to issue an endangerment finding regarding leaded aviation fuel. That said, it is unconscionable that your agencies are refusing to even participate in a conversation about lead in children's blood. I would expect this of the previous administration, but not this one. You should welcome the opportunity to raise awareness about your actions on this issue, even if they are still at an early stage. Your refusal to appear calls into question your commitment to transparency and environmental justice. I implore you to send someone to the Subcommittee's hearing this week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ro Khanna", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ro Khanna
Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Ralph Norman, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment