

STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 2080
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
(916) 445-1353
(916) 324-4823 FAX

10951 W. PICO BLVD., #202
LOS ANGELES, CA 90064
(310) 441-9084
(310) 441-0724 FAX

Senate
California Legislature

TOM HAYDEN
SENATOR
TWENTY-THIRD DISTRICT



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TRANSPORTATION

November 6, 2000

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
Dennis Dickerson, Executive Director
320 West Fourth Street, Suite 200
Los Angeles, California 90013

Re: Chromium Six Contamination

Dear Mr. Dickerson and Members of the Board:

I regret that I cannot attend and testify in person at the meeting of the regional board on November 13th, on the Chromium Six issue. Here, however, are my thoughts.

I urge the state and regional boards to request a one-time budget augmentation to cope with the pressing need for more staff to identify sources of Chromium Six pollution and take necessary remedial steps. I appreciate your identification of some 200 sites in the San Fernando Valley, which only underscores the need for action.

The degrading and contamination of our drinking water supply represents a failure of government to protect the public interest on the deepest level. Millions of people are forced to choose bottled water, while millions more cannot afford it and vulnerable populations like children are exposed every day to the hazards of the drinking water fountain. Regulators in charge of protecting public health are shamefully diluting the standard of acceptable risk under pressure from water agencies with economic motives.

The exception to the rule is the state Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment which has known for a decade that Chromium Six is an oral carcinogen and which finally has proposed a Public Health Goal ("PHG") to establish a de minimus risk of cancer occurring. That PHG should be swiftly accepted as a standard. State and federal health officials who are perpetuating more lenient standards were exposed at recent Senate hearings as having failed to consider numerous studies pointing to the need for greater prevention and protection.

At our town hall meeting at the Dixie Canyon Elementary School, Mr. Dickerson, you agreed to allow Erin Brokovich to inspect the regional board's files and monitoring programs, a much-needed step toward credibility. If I can facilitate that process in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Hayden".

Senator Tom Hayden



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