



Leo W. Gerard
International President

June 4, 2008

VIA FAX

House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Chemical Safety Board Appropriations

Dear Representative:

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) has been a strong voice for improved workplace safety. There are 40 employees, in a single office, responsible for investigating all chemical accidents. Last year, there were over 900 chemical accidents reported and only the most serious of which were investigated; only 8 of 31 serious accidents were investigated due to the limitations of staff and budget.

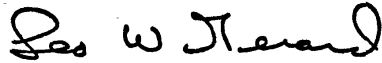
The CSB is also under a very burdensome appropriations rider dating from 2000 dealing with the oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency Inspector General, which has reduced the Board's independence from the very agency to which it makes safety recommendations. They have been funded at a minimal level and have remained unchanged for five years. The current budget is half of what Congress intended when the agency was first conceived; \$12 million in 1989, which is equal to \$20 million today. The current budget for 2007 is \$9 million. For 2009, they have requested \$10.6 million which would maintain current levels and support hiring of more investigators and enable video production and public outreach to continue.

The safety videos they produce are widely used for training purposes. In the videos, the safety system failures leading to the event are graphically defined and recommendations follow on the video showing what steps need to be taken to eliminate the hazards. The CSB has also recommended new OSHA standards involving reactive chemicals and combustible dust which, if implemented, have a potential to reduce worker fatalities.

Their investigations are focused on preventing accidents that kill workers and harm communities. This investment in accident investigations is needed to protect

American workers and their communities. **We strongly encourage the subcommittee to increase the CSB appropriations to a level which would enable the Chemical Safety Board to increase its effectiveness.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leo W. Gerard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leo" being the most prominent.

Leo W. Gerard
International President

LWG/pak

c: International Executive Board