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For Immediate Release

New Senate Bill Could Impact Barrel Fill Cleanup

Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) announced yesterday that he will introduce legislation reinstating the “polluter pays” tax that expired in 1995. That tax on waste-generating industries was a key source of revenue for Superfund site cleanups, but it expired after the 1994 midterm elections with GOP opposition.

Tremont City Barrel Fill in German Township, currently a Superfund Alternative Site, could be affected if the site is designated as a Superfund site within the coming year. As a Superfund site it would become one of more than 1300 sites nationally whose cleanup has been stalled due to lack of funds for the program and dependency on the corporations responsible to pay.

Lois Gibbs, defacto mother of the Superfund program and Executive Director of the Center for Health, Environment and Justice (www.chej.org), will testify today before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works in support of the bill. In her testimony she will cite Tremont City Barrel Fill as one site where a EPA cleanup fund could make the difference in expediting the cleanup.

“Thirty-five years is a long time for tens of thousands of barrels containing hazardous wastes to be buried over the sole source aquifer for Clark County residents,” says Marilyn Welker, President of People for Safe Water. “We know the barrels are leaking.” Since the expiration of the “polluter pays” tax in 1995, EPA has lacked funds to clean up toxic sites unless the responsible corporations agree to pay.

A plan that would have permanently removed all hazardous wastes from the site was presented to the community in June 2011, tagged with an estimated cost of \$57 million. After Chemical Waste Management submitted a new plan during an extended public comment period, EPA announced its adoption in June 2012 with an estimated cost of \$28 million. All local public officials, the Ohio EPA, and citizens oppose the current plan. Chemical Waste Management will be responsible for 55% of the cleanup costs, with several other corporations sharing the remaining costs.

People for Safe Water website: www.peopleforsafewater.org