

October 26, 2015

Nine Member Community Delegation Urges U.S. EPA Officials to Address Threats to Clark County Water Supply

COLUMBUS— Nine community leaders from Clark County traveled to Chicago today to meet with U.S. EPA Region 5 Deputy Regional Administrator Bob Kaplan and Superfund Division Director Richard Karl to discuss the ongoing issue of the Tremont City Barrel Fill. The group was led by State Senator **Chris Widener** (R-Springfield) as a follow up to an August Community forum in Springfield, Ohio. They were joined by Ohio EPA Director Craig Butler.

The barrel fill has 3 million gallons of liquid and solid waste and sits over the largest single-source aquifer in the US. It supplies water for 5 million people from Springfield, Dayton and areas southward to Cincinnati.

“We are concerned about U.S. EPA’s recommendation to put some hazardous waste back into the landfill after a process of excavating the 8 acre site, and we are hoping to get answers,” said Widener. “We want the best results for our community and felt it was important to meet in person with those making the decisions.”

State Representative Kyle Koehler said, "Today’s meeting was a direct result of the large community turnout at the meeting in August. We hope they are listening."

In August, the U.S. EPA sent representatives to Springfield to discuss their recommended remediation for the barrel fill. Over 700 community members attended and the U.S. EPA representatives took questions for two hours. The current removal option was met with overwhelming opposition from the community and its leaders because it calls for some hazardous waste to be left on site.

The meeting today, which also lasted two hours, was a continuation of discussions to voice public concerns from the community and their desire to remove all hazardous waste from the site.

"We believe they listened to our concerns, and they agreed to take another look at the remediation options. We are looking forward to what they may come up with," said Springfield Mayor Warren Copeland.

The U.S. EPA's proposed remedy would be part of a Superfund Alternative project, and in order to move forward the U.S. EPA would like to have approval of the removal option from the community, the Ohio EPA director and the Governor. The U.S. EPA wants the site listed on the National Priority list once an option is selected to ensure the responsible parties comply with all remediation orders.

State Representative Bob Hackett said, "They listened and I’m cautiously optimistic.”

“We were united in our message and as a community. We need the U.S. EPA to keep working on other options to make sure our water is safe for the long haul. With other states starving for good water, there is too much at stake to pick the wrong option here,” Widener added.

Community Leaders Attending Today’s Meeting Included:

State Senator Chris Widener
State Representative Bob Hackett
State Representative Kyle Koehler
Springfield City Manager Jim Bodenmiller
Springfield Mayor Warren Copeland
Clark County Commissioner John Detrick
Clark County Health Commissioner Charles Patterson
Springfield Chamber President Michael McDorman
Springfield Chamber Chairman John Landess

Ohio EPA Representatives Attending Today’s Meeting Included:

Ohio EPA Director Craig Butler
Ohio EPA S-District Operations Mike Proffitt
Ohio EPA Assistant Director Environment Policy, Priorities and Legislation Laura Factor

Attendees From U.S. EPA Attending Today’s Meeting Included:

Deputy Region 5 Administrator Bob Kaplan
Superfund Division Director Rick Karl
Branch Manager for U.S. EPA Region 5 Superfund Program Joan Tanaka
Remedial Project Manager Jena Sleboda-Braun