

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 3, 2014

The Honorable Judith Enck
Regional Administrator
US EPA Region 2
290 Broadway
New York, New York 10007-1866

Dear Administrator Enck:

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to protecting public health and the environment in New Jersey. We write to you today regarding the Passaic Valley Water Commission (PVWC)'s compliance plan for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s LT2 rule.

As you know, the EPA published the LT2 rule in 2006 to provide public health protection from illness due to microbial pathogens in drinking water. The rule requires that open-air reservoirs that store water that has already been treated, either "cover or retreat" their water to avoid the contamination. Uncovered reservoirs storing treated water, which are piped directly into our homes and businesses, are a risk, not only for parasite borne illnesses and contamination from runoff, but to our homeland security as well. We understand that today there are only 34 uncovered finished water reservoirs nationwide, down from 81 when this regulation was first published, and over 700 in the 1970s.

The PVWC manages three open air reservoirs in Passaic County, Great Notch, Levine and New Street, and, under the supervision of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, has developed a plan to comply with LT2 by draining the reservoirs and replacing them with concrete storage tanks. Some of our constituents and several towns in the PVWC's service area have raised concerns with the implementation of the PVWC's plan. The reservoirs in questions have long contributed to the aesthetic character of the surrounding area, including Garrett Mountain Reservation, Rifle Camp Park and the Great Falls National Historical Park and Historic District. Additionally, there are concerns about the impact any plan will have on ratepayers. We share many of these concerns. We think you would agree that protecting the historic character of our communities and understanding the consequences of the plan on ratepayers are surely worthy considerations.

We strongly believe that there is a way to ensure that the customers of the PVWC have clean, safe drinking water while also keeping these considerations in mind. This process must include a robust public comment and debate, which we believe has been lacking. We believe that all parties—state, federal and local—can come together around a common sense strategy to protect

public health in a cost effective manner. To that end, before this plan advances any further, we would request that the Environmental Protection Agency come to Passaic County, meet with members of the community, and explain the LT2 rule and why its implementation is important for public health and the environmental protection of our communities. Furthermore, EPA can and should work with the community and the water commission to develop a mutually acceptable implementation strategy to meet this federal mandate.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may ever be of service.

Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

cc: Mr. Bob Martin, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Mr. Joseph Bella, Executive Director, Passaic Valley Water Commission