

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 13, 2015

NJDEP

Attn: Exxon Mobil Bayway Comments
P.O. Box 420 Mail Code 401-06Q
Trenton, N.J. 08625-0420

To whom it may concern,

We are writing to express our strong concerns with the Christie Administration's proposed settlement in the State's lawsuit against Exxon Mobil Corporation for the company's contamination of two oil refineries. If approved, we believe that this settlement would be wholly inadequate in properly restoring the sites and compensating the State of New Jersey for decades of rampant pollution.

For more than a century, oil refineries now owned by Exxon have discharged more than 600 hazardous chemicals over more than 1,500 acres of lands held in the public trust in northern New Jersey, including wetlands, marshes, and meadows. These same facilities contaminated our ground water and dumped hazardous waste into our ponds and streams. The ecological health of our natural environment has been ruined and will require decades and billions of dollars to not just restore the lands but compensate the public for the loss use and damage from the oil spills. Expert report compiled for the State by Stratus Consulting Inc. of Colorado and Toxicological & Environmental Associates Inc. of Alabama assessed the cost of undoing of more than 100 years of pollution at the Bayonne and Linden refineries at \$8.9 billion, indicating that it would require \$2.5 billion to restore the sites and an additional \$6.4 "to compensate for the decades of harm."

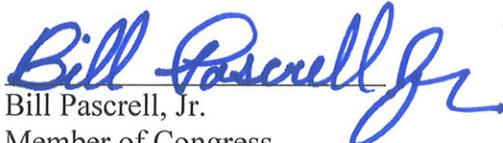
Despite the fact that the State Attorney General's office was seeking a nearly \$9 billion settlement, the Christie Administration opted for a settlement of \$225 million in damages – roughly three cents on the dollar – and does not require Exxon to fully restore the land to its original condition. The proposed settlement also includes 16 additional sites not included in the original lawsuit. The residents of the contaminated areas deserve to have the sites cleaned up, the natural resources there restored, and an assurance that political influence did not inappropriately impact this settlement.

Finally, we are concerned about the prospect of settlement funds being diverted away from their intended use and instead transferred into the State's general fund to balance the budget. As you know, New Jersey state law allows the transfer of any recovered funds in excess of \$50 million to the state general fund. In 2013, Governor Christie redirected \$147.5 million of the \$165 million settlement between the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Occidental Chemical Corporation over toxic pollution in the Passaic River into the general fund.

Reversing the damage done to the natural resources surrounding Exxon's Bayway and Bayonne operations will be a difficult but important undertaking. However, we do not believe that the settlement proposed by the Christie Administration will achieve this important goal. We urge you to ensure that any settlement includes sufficient funds to restore the lands that these refineries have destroyed.

Thank you for consideration of this matter.

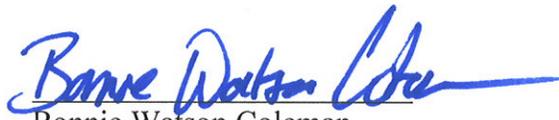
Sincerely,


Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress


Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress


Albio Sires
Member of Congress


Donald Norcross
Member of Congress


Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress