

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 13, 2007

Mr. Dale Ormond, Acting Director
Chemical Materials Agency
ATTN: AMSCM-PA
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland 21010-5424

Dear Mr. Ormond:

As you are no doubt aware, the Kentucky Department of Environmental Protection (KDEP) recently released its Investigative Report (CIV20060007) on the status of the storage of chemical weapons housed at the Blue Grass Army Depot in Richmond, Kentucky. To say the least, the results were damning.

The Report concludes that the Army has “failed to ensure that employees are properly trained to prevent releases of chemical warfare agents to the environment” and “decisions are being made . . . [that do not] ensure protection of human health and the environment”. Perhaps even more unsettling is that nine of the allegations were referred to state and federal authorities for criminal investigation.

We are gravely concerned by the findings contained within this Report. As you well know, the weapons stored at the Depot are among the most lethal in the entire U.S. stockpile and they are located in the heart of the local community. This is a public safety issue of the highest order; for the local community and for the employees at the Depot.

Accordingly, we believe that these findings call for immediate and decisive action on your part. We believe that you must put in place proper procedures to rectify the situation, as well as take what actions are necessary against any supervisors responsible for these egregious violations.

We are also troubled about reports we have heard about the culture at the Chemical Activity, one that allegedly stifles internal discussion and punishes those who raise concerns about Depot safety practices. Accordingly, we urge you to take precautions to ensure that whistleblowers and other internal dissenters (including security personnel) are not only protected from retribution, as required by law, but that their input is included in efforts to remedy the safety problems the Depot faces. With so much at risk, “business as usual” will not suffice.

We understand that ongoing criminal investigations may impose confidentiality restrictions. Consistent with any such restrictions, we would like to be fully briefed in the upcoming weeks regarding the conditions reflected in the Report, including what concrete actions you have instituted to remedy these matters.

Please coordinate with Reb Brownell of Senator McConnell's office at 202-224-5029 to set up an appropriate time and venue for such briefing as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



MITCH McCONNELL
UNITED STATES SENATOR



JIM BUNNING
UNITED STATES SENATOR



BEN CHANDLER
UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

cc: General Benjamin Griffin, Commander Army Material Command