



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2

290 BROADWAY

NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

OCT 21 1999

Ms. Marilyn Pulver
Fort Edward Town Councilwoman
Co-Chair Agricultural Liaison Group
RD 1, Box 222
Fort Edward, NY 12828

Dear Ms. Pulver:

This is in response to your August 17, 1999 letter, in which you request a public meeting with "EPA's and GE's technical teams to answer the public's questions on the Hudson River PCB issue."

As you may know, in a January 21, 1998 letter to then-Representative Solomon, EPA agreed to have the public attend meetings where the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the State of New York (NYS), and General Electric Company (GE) express their positions on issues. While the planned May 5, 1999 public meeting with EPA and GE to discuss technical issues related to the Reassessment was not held, EPA has held ten public meetings since then at which technical issues have been discussed. For example, representatives of NYS and GE attended EPA's May 18 Joint Liaison Group meeting for release of the Baseline Modeling Report and the August 4 meeting for release of the Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments. At the meetings, EPA responded to questions and comments from GE, NYS, and the public. The meetings also initiated public comment periods on the reports, and EPA will respond in writing to all significant comment received in Responsiveness Summaries to be released in early 2000.

In addition to the Joint Liaison meetings, EPA has held afternoon and evening public availability sessions to answer questions from the public on the Baseline Modeling Report and the Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments, and sponsored full-day meetings of its Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) to discuss the reports. The STC is comprised of scientists and researchers who provide technical input to EPA on Reassessment issues. These meetings were open to the public. The STC members, which include representatives of GE and NYS, as well as the public had ample opportunity to ask questions of EPA's technical team at these meetings.

EPA also holds semi-annual meetings of the Hudson River PCBs Oversight Committee (HROC) and the Steering Committee. These meetings are also open to the public. The last HROC meeting was on July 21, 1999. The last Steering Committee meeting was on April 12, 1999 and the next one will be on October 26, 1999. At these meetings, EPA is available to answer questions and to hear concerns from members of the public expressed through the officers of the

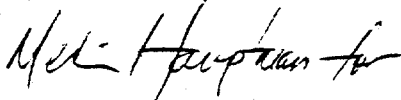
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four Liaison Groups (Agricultural, Citizen, Environmental, Government) or from any other member of the public at the question and answer period that follows.

Lastly, EPA has scheduled peer reviews of the Baseline Modeling Report and the Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments. The peer review for the Baseline Modeling Report is scheduled for March 2000 and the peer review for the Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments is scheduled for May 2000. The peer review will focus on technical issues that are posed in the form of questions called "the charge." As it has in the past, EPA will solicit public input on the charge, and GE, NYS and the general public will have an opportunity to provide observer comments to the independent scientists on the peer review panel. In addition, the peer reviewers will be provided with copies of the Responsiveness Summaries for the documents under review, which will contain all significant comments received from GE, NYS, and other members of the public, as well as EPA's responses to those comments. The peer review process will help ensure that the Agency's ultimate decision is based on sound, credible science.

EPA is committed to responding to the public's questions on the Reassessment. We have held more than 60 public meetings on the Reassessment since it began in 1991 and have issued numerous Responsiveness Summaries responding to comments and questions from the public. In light of this, it is unclear to what "questions on the Hudson River PCB issue" you refer. If you are aware of new questions that the public would like addressed, please provide them to Ann Rychlenski, the Community Relations Coordinator for the site, at (212) 637-3672.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William McCabe".

William McCabe, Deputy Director
Emergency and Remedial Response Division

cc: John Haggard, GE
Bill Ports, NYSDEC