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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2002**

February 25, 2005

**C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER**

2ND DISTRICT, MARYLAND

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AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Mr. Steve L. Johnson  
Acting Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Acting Administrator Johnson:

I am writing to urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to prioritize the regulation of perchlorate and establish a national drinking water standard for the contaminant. Perchlorate has polluted municipal water supplies in Maryland, California and dozens of other states throughout the country. As the Representative for Maryland's Second Congressional District that includes one of the contaminated areas, I am particularly concerned for the citizens of Harford County, Maryland, where perchlorate has been detected in public drinking wells near Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG).

In 2002, the city of Aberdeen, Maryland temporarily closed four municipal wells near APG after perchlorate escaped into the water supply from the Army's testing range. The highest level found in the groundwater at APG has been about 23 parts per billion. Perchlorate is a toxin that can affect the thyroid's ability to take up essential nutrients. Although research into the health effects continue, we have to make sure that we put the safe drinking water needs of our citizens first. In an October 4, 2002, draft order to the Army, the EPA indicated that harm maybe caused by the consumption of perchlorate contaminated water. However, the Army has indicated that without a national standard they cannot proceed with any clean up.

Therefore, I strongly recommend that the EPA expeditiously establish a national drinking water standard for perchlorate. Our country needs a national standard in order to expedite cleanup efforts at sites across the country and to ensure safe drinking water for the residents of Harford County and for all Americans.

Sincerely,



C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress

CADR:wg