

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
INTELLIGENCE
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

May 16, 2018

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney,

I am writing in response to recent reports¹ that the Administration has delayed the release of a study by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) as evidenced by emails released under the authority of the Freedom of Information Act to the Union of Concerned Scientists. I believe that this study will be critically important to the public health of West Virginians and am requesting your expeditious release of the data contained therein.

On April 13, 2018, I joined a letter with my colleagues encouraging the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a Maximum Contaminant Level for per- and polyflouroalkyl substances (PFAS), such as perflourooctanoic acid (PFOA) – a chemical that has caused ongoing contamination and public health challenges in West Virginia for some time. The current lifetime health advisory level issued by the EPA is 70 parts per trillion. The draft ATSDR study reportedly contains conclusions that PFAS pose risks to human health at lower levels than the EPA currently advises.

As you must know, the adverse effects of contamination due to these chemicals continue to plague communities across the country. And they will continue to do so if not properly addressed. A key step to ensuring that these communities are armed with the information and resources needed to address the numerous adverse health effects caused by these persistent contaminants (as well as to prevent further contamination) is to ensure that we have current and sound data. So, I am very concerned by the reports that officials from the Administration intervened in the timely release of this study, and I request its immediate release. The transparent and expeditious release of data by the federal government is of critical importance to ensuring we are judiciously and comprehensively responding to these challenges.

Thank you for your attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

¹ "White House, EPA headed off chemical pollution study." Politico.
<https://www.politico.com/story/2018/05/14/emails-white-house-interfered-with-science-study-536950>. Last accessed May 16, 2018.

Cc: The Honorable James Mattis
The Honorable Alex Azar
The Honorable Scott Pruitt