

Congress Must Act to Secure Chemical Plants

7 Facilities in Delaware Vulnerable to Attack

In Delaware, 7 plants each put 10,000 or more people at risk. Safer and more secure alternatives are already being used in our state. Call on Congress to protect our community and the American people by asking them to enact comprehensive chemical security legislation.

Looming Disasters

U.S. chemical plants remain one of the sectors of America's infrastructure that is most vulnerable to terrorist attacks. More than 100 million Americans are put at risk by just 300 of the nation's "high risk" chemical plants. Unless Congress replaces the flawed temporary law with a comprehensive chemical security program, most major U.S. cities will remain at risk.

The price of failure could be staggering. The Department of Homeland Security has identified 6,300 plants as "high risk." In 2004, the Homeland Security Council estimated that an attack on a chemical facility would kill 17,500 people, seriously injure 10,000 more people, and send an additional 100,000 people to the hospital.

Safer Alternatives are Available

The good news is that some of these hazards are preventable. Nationwide, 287 plants have switched to safer and more secure chemicals or processes since 1999, thereby eliminating risks to 38.5 million Americans. Cost effective safer technologies are used in a wide variety of facilities including water treatment plants, power plants, oil refineries and other manufacturers. Safer and more secure chemicals are already being used in our state, eliminating these risks to 560,000 people. Safer alternatives do not cost the plant much and may even save them money, will create jobs, and are a long-term investment in our community.

Many facilities, however, have yet to adopt safer technologies. Nearly eight years after the 9/11 attacks, we need chemical security standards that put all high-risk facilities on an even playing field.

Act Now to Protect Your Family and Community

Congress should pass legislation (H.R. 2868 & H.R. 3258) without loopholes that protects the American people from this preventable threat. In order to protect American families, communities and workers, legislation must:

- Include requirements to convert the highest risk chemical plants to safer and more secure alternatives;
- Involve workers in planning and protecting the plant from attacks and accidents, and
- Provide information to the public that ensures compliance with the law and government accountability.

“

In 2006, Senator Obama authored or supported three bills that would have ensured the use of safer chemical processes. As he introduced one of them on the Senate floor he said, "Each one of these methods reduces the danger that chemical plants pose to our communities and makes them less appealing targets for terrorists." He also said, "We cannot allow chemical industry lobbyists to dictate the terms of this debate...We cannot allow our security to be hijacked by corporate interests."

”