

October 1, 2018

Andrew R. Wheeler, JD, MBA  
Acting Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Acting Administrator Wheeler:

The undersigned groups write with great concern about the news reports<sup>i</sup> that Dr. Ruth Etzel, director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Children's Health Protection (OCHP), has been placed on administrative leave.

Established in 1997, OCHP is the only office within EPA dedicated to the health of children. Children are not little adults, and OCHP, as well as its pediatrician leadership, have the expertise to inform EPA policymaking so that it adequately protects children. Without this office and pediatric expertise, we are concerned that EPA policy could inadvertently harm or exclude children.

By placing Dr. Etzel on leave, the EPA has sent a signal that children's health is not a priority for the agency. We are particularly perplexed that this move has happened mere days before the start of Children's Health Month. The undersigned groups ask that EPA immediately clarify what action it has taken with regards to Dr. Etzel and with regards to OCHP, and make no further attempts to dismantle, re-organize, diminish, or otherwise reduce the abilities and authorities of OCHP.

In addition, by this letter the undersigned organizations formally request a meeting with you and the heads of our organizations. To arrange this meeting, please contact Ami Gadhia at the American Academy of Pediatrics, at [agadhia@aap.org](mailto:agadhia@aap.org) or (202) 347-8600.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
African American Health Alliance  
Alaska Community Action on Toxics  
Allergy & Asthma Network  
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Academy Pediatrics, Maryland Chapter  
American Academy of Pediatrics, Pennsylvania Chapter  
American Pediatric Society

American Public Health Association  
As You Sow  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Black Millennials for Flint  
Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester  
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners  
California Brain Tumor Association  
California Safe Schools  
Center for Climate Change and Health  
Center for Environmental Health  
Central California Asthma Collaborative  
Ceres Community Project  
Child Care Aware® of America  
Childhood Lead Action Project  
Children's Environmental Health Network  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
Clean Water Action  
Climate for Health  
Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning  
Collaborative for High Performance Schools  
Collaborative on Health and the Environment  
Columbia Center for Children's Environmental Health  
Daily Acts Organization  
Earthjustice  
ecoAmerica  
Ecology Center  
Emory University Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Environmental Health Strategy Center  
Environmental Health Student Association  
Environmental Health Watch  
Environmental Integrity Project  
Environmental Working Group

First Focus  
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative  
Health Care Without Harm  
Healthy Babies Bright Futures  
Healthy Building Network  
Healthy Children Project  
Healthy Schools Network  
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai  
Institute of Neurotoxicology & Neurological Disorders  
International Society for Children's Health and the Environment  
International Society of Environmental Epidemiology  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health  
Johns Hopkins Department of Environmental Health and Engineering  
Lead Safe Mama, LLC  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois  
Learning Disabilities Association of Maine  
Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota  
Learning Disabilities Association of South Carolina  
Learning Disabilities Association of Tennessee  
Learning Disabilities Association of Utah  
Learning Disabilities Association of Western New York  
Learning Disabilities of America of Texas  
March of Dimes  
Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health  
Moms Clean Air Force  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Center for Healthy Housing  
National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition  
Ohio Environmental Council

Ohio Healthy Homes Network  
Oregon Environmental Council  
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Parents For Students Safety  
Pediatric Public Health Initiative  
Pennsylvania Head Start Association  
Pesticide Action Network  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Tennessee Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Los Angeles  
Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Pennsylvania Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Wisconsin Chapter and the  
Wisconsin Environmental Health Network  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Philadelphia  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Colorado Chapter  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Florida Chapter  
Pioneer Valley Asthma Coalition  
Prevention Institute  
Public Health Institute  
Rachel Carson Council  
Rachel's Network  
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition  
Revitalize Community Development Corporation  
Riley Asthma Program  
Safer Chemicals Healthy Families  
Safer States  
Sears-Swetland Family Foundation  
Sierra Club  
Society for Public Health Education  
Sonoma County Conservation Action  
Southern Adirondack Child Care Network  
Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership

The Great Lakes Center for Children's Environmental Health  
Toxics Information Project  
Trust for America's Health  
UCLA Center for Occupational and Environmental Health  
UCLA Fielding School of Public Health  
UCSF School of Nursing California Childcare Health Program  
UCSF Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice  
Women for a Healthy Environment  
350 Bay Area

---

<sup>i</sup> "E.P.A. Places the Head of Its Office of Children's Health on Leave," available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/26/climate/epa-etzel-children-health-program.html>.