



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Members:

Don Aragon
Sue Briggum
Chuck Barlow
M. Kathryn Brown
Peter Captain, Sr.
Jolene Catron
Wynecta Fisher
Jodena Henneke
Hilton Kelley
Langdon Marsh
Paul Mohai
Shankar Prasad
John Ridgway
Patricia Salkin
ElizabethYeampierre

April 16, 2010

Lisa P. Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (MC1101A)
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

The National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) is pleased to commend the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its development and implementation of the *Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)* demonstration program. Because of the CARE successes demonstrated to the NEJAC, including during our most recent meeting in January 2010, we advise EPA to increase the CARE Program's funding so that more communities can benefit from it.

The essence of the CARE program has been of high interest to the NEJAC for years. Prior to the program's inception, we advised EPA to move in the direction that the CARE Program represents. NEJAC's Report, Ensuring Risk Reduction in Communities with Multiple Stressors: Environmental Justice and Cumulative Risks/Impacts, December 2004, cited the importance of such an approach¹.

CARE has already proven to be a high quality community tool that supports environmental justice. This was independently documented in a report by the National Academy of Public Administration, Putting Community First: A Promising Approach to Federal Collaboration for Environmental Improvement – An Evaluation of the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Demonstration Project, May 2009². Again, this is a credit to EPA and the staff who have worked so hard to build the CARE Program.

And yet, the need for expansion of the CARE Program far surpasses its current funding. In 2009, only 9 grants out of 235 proposals were awarded (less than 4%). The 2010 grant cycle expects about the same. Environmental justice communities are demonstrating with their proposal submissions that the CARE Program is a community tool they need. This is why the NEJAC is compelled to advise and

¹ <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/publications/ej/nejac/nejac-cum-risk-rpt-122104.pdf>

² http://www.napawash.org/pc_management_studies/CARE/5-21-09_Final_Evaluation_Report.pdf

encourage expansion of and increased funding for the CARE program by your Agency.

In closing, the NEJAC fully applauds the CARE Program's successes and strongly encourages EPA to expand its growth. Such expansion would also increase the support of your priority to address the most vulnerable communities throughout the nation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Ridgway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

John Ridgway,
Acting Vice Chair

cc:

NEJAC Members

Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

Peter S. Silva, Assistant Administrator, Office of Water

Gina McCarthy, Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation

Steve Owens, Assistant Administration, Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances

Charles Lee, Director, Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ)

Victoria Robinson, NEJAC DFO

