

From: (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy
To: [Title VI Complaints](#)
Subject: Fwd: U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal and Hartford, CT Veterans Tackle Long-Time Wastewater and Sewage Overflows in Black Community
Date: Wednesday, January 18, 2023 12:46:06 PM
Attachments: [Screenshot_20230117-061445](#) (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy

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From: (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy
Date: Wed, Jan 18, 2023, 12:25 PM
Subject: Fwd: U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal and Hartford, CT Veterans Tackle Long-Time Wastewater and Sewage Overflows in Black Community
To: <Title_VI_Complaint@epa.gov>

Good morning Jonathon Stein:

As we discussed earlier on the phone, the mentioned civil rights complaint is being filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For years, residents in the North End of Hartford, CT have been discriminated against based on race, color and national origin. The area is made up of African and Caribbean Americans, as well as, Latinos.

This complaint is being filed against two entities:

1. The City of Hartford, CT
(Mayor Luke Bronin)
2. Metropolitan Water District (Chairman William DiBella)

Yesterday, several media outlets revisited a story that they were all too familiar with, which is:

1. Gross sewage and sewer overflows.
2. Flooding in public streets due to the city and MDC's refusal to maintain and replace infrastructure that is over a century old

*** Please refer to the several news reports from January 16, 17, and 18, 2023.

In 2021, Mayor Bronin and the MDC identified the actual problems for the flooding (see article dated October 2021). According to both of them, the solution consisted of separating the CSOs, which are combined sewage and storm pipes -- from each other. It was also revealed that the fix would cost \$35 million. These floods occurred during the pandemic.

During that time, the Mayor Bronin had received hundreds of millions of dollars in COVID and ARPA funds. Consequently, none of those funds were used to address the long standing flooding problem in the urban community.

Today, billions of dollars of infrastructure funds and a \$580 million fund for wastewater and sewage repairs in distressed areas, are available for these repairs. It is also a fact that the city and the MDC's focus has been on acquiring land to turn it into an elaborate MDC headquarters and a tourist area. In times past, the City has been able to repurpose and divert federal funding to his pet projects, to include the building of luxury, unaffordable apartments on the opposite side of the city.

These unjust and unfair use, or misuse of government funds has caused a public health crisis in the North End of Hartford. Besides the routine flooding, Black and brown people are exposed to damaging toxins from the sewage water, which has also compromised the air quality.

I am asking the EPA to expedite this process, and to freeze funding to the City of Hartford and the MDC. An audit is also necessary to determine the use of millions of dollars of funding that came to Hartford, Connecticut through the CLEAN WATER ACT.

Thank you.

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Both the city and the MDC receive federal funds which are supposed to used to maintain a safe and healthy water system for all residents.

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From: (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy

Date: Wed, Jan 18, 2023, 10:47 AM

Subject: U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal and Hartford, CT Veterans Tackle Long-Time Wastewater and Sewage Overflows in Black Community

To: <Regan.Michael@epa.gov>, Kehoe, Richard (Blumenthal)

<Richard_Kehoe@blumenthal.senate.gov>, Stevens, Graham <Graham.Stevens@ct.gov>,

Lawson, Michael (Blumenthal) <Michael_Lawson@blumenthal.senate.gov>, Uysal, John (Blumenthal) <John_Uysal@blumenthal.senate.gov>

Cc: (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy

Good morning EPA Administrator Regan:

My name is (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy, and I am a veteran and community activist. For the past few days, several main media outlets have covered a tragic true storu sewage overflows and flooding, that only occur in the poor, Black communities. As a disabled veteran, and a

community activist in my native Hartford, I have experienced, first hand, the devastation the community continues to experience.

Thankfully, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal is fighting for us, in our quest for environmental justice. Just yesterday, we held a forum where several residents gave testimonies about the flooding.

Administrator Regan, I am reaching out to you for two reasons:

1. After seeing your interview on CBS MORNINGS with my former WFSB-TV3 colleague, Gayle King; I am convinced that you are serious about confronting environmental racism.
2. I filed a complaint with the EPA Boston Office against the Metropolitan Water District (MDC) and Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin. As a result of my complaint, EPA BOSTON scheduled a trip to Hartford to speak with several victims who experienced the flooding. This meeting was scheduled for January 17, 2023 at the American League in Hartford.

Unfortunately, EPA Boston investigators decided that they would not meet with the Black victims in Hartford, because the media was covering the story.

While I do understand that EPA Investigator (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Ent. Privacy did not have the authority to communicate with the media, I do not understand why he totally disrespected the victims, by canceling his meeting with me, or the victims. All we were asking for was transparency. The investigators should have come to the meeting, sat in silence, and listened to critical testimony needed in order to make an unbiased conclusion.

To this point, Investigator (b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Ent. Privacy did not cancel his meetings with executives with the MDC, which are scheduled for today and tomorrow. But he canceled the appointment with me -- the one who filed the complaint. That's bias, as well as, discriminative.

Administrator Regan, this morning I spoke with Jonathan Stein, your case worker in the D.C. office. At my request, Mr. Stein viewed some of the yesterday's news stories about the sewage overflows in Hartford. Needless to say, Mr. Stein was disgusted by the story. At that point, he led me to your website to file a complaint. I was then told that he could not accept over phone a complaint over the phone.

Consequently, Hartford is suffering an environmental injustice that's preventable and curable. And while I am aware of the filing procedures, a 180 day administrative process may prove to be detrimental to the community.

With billions of dollars of Clean Water Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Funding; the Black residents in the community have been neglected. It is my opinion that the city and the MDC have other uses for these funds. Meanwhile, the levees are breaking.

In addition, the MDC may be in violation of Consent Decrees with the EPA and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The MDC had a court ordered agreement to repair 15,000 feet of piping in the Gully Brook region, or the "hood" by December 31, 2022. However, I don't believe that these repairs have happened. Seemingly, there is no enforcement of these decrees by EPA Boston, nor DEEP.

Senator Blumenthal has assured the community that he would follow up and follow through with the EPA in Washington. With that said, we are encouraged.

In closing, although the City of Hartford and the MDC may claim to not have money for these repairs; there are billions of dollars at their disposal for projects they consider a priority. Tragically, the priority is not given to the poor, minority communities.

The community is asking that you, or a caring representative, come visit the flood and sewer overflow areas in Hartford's North End. We are also asking that the City of Hartford and the MDC be held responsible, and accountable for years of flagrant neglect and environmental injustice towards the predominantly Black communities in Hartford, CT.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Ent. Privacy

U.S. Army Disabled Veteran and Advocate/Community Activist