

August 12, 2013

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20460-0007

**RE: Clean-up and Redevelopment of Former AK Steel Coke Plant Site in Ashland
Kentucky**

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

I write to request that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) consider a proposal recently submitted to your agency by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet (EEC). This proposal requests that the EPA transfer its enforcement and oversight authority for the characterization and clean-up of the former AK Steel Coke Plant located in Ashland, Kentucky to the EEC.

In June of 2011, AK Steel Corporation ceased production at this facility. During previous inspections at the facility, the EPA identified various environmental issues, including issues related to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Consequently, the EPA is proceeding with enforcement actions that will likely result in a prolonged clean-up process.

The termination of this facility has been devastating to the Ashland community. The plant's closing resulted in the loss of approximately 350 direct and indirect jobs in the region. Furthermore, payroll tax revenues to the City of Ashland were reduced by approximately \$500,000. This blow comes to a region, Appalachia, already burdened by high unemployment brought on by costly regulations to the coal industry. Direct mining employment in Eastern Kentucky has fallen by nearly 30 percent since 2011, a loss of over 4,000 jobs.

The timely cleanup and redevelopment of the AK Plant is essential for the Commonwealth and the City of Ashland. Allowing the Kentucky EEC—which has the programmatic resources to complete the project—to lead the clean-up effort, with oversight from the EPA, will expedite this process. The sooner the property can be cleaned and redeveloped, the sooner it can be placed on the market to be purchased by another industrial user and create much-needed jobs for the citizens of Ashland.

I am confident that the Kentucky EEC is capable of addressing the regulatory violations brought on by the EPA in an effective and timely manner that will ensure the protection of human health and the environment. Therefore, I request that the EPA transfer the enforcement and oversight roles for addressing the environmental issues at the AK Plant to the EEC.

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I appreciate your time and attention to this request. Please direct any inquiries and all relevant information to Tate Bennett in my Washington, D.C. office at (202) 224-2541. I look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mitch McConnell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

MITCH McCONNELL
UNITED STATES SENATOR

MM/bd