

June 24, 2021

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Joyce  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**RE: US EPA Safer Choice Program**

Dear Chairwoman Pingree, Chairman Merkley, Ranking Members Joyce and Murkowski:

We are writing to express our strong support for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safer Choice Program and to encourage you to provide funding at a level that allows the program to be fully staffed and resourced.

In addition, we ask you to include the following report language:

*The Committee supports the Safer Choice program and directs that the program be funded and operated at least at levels consistent with Fiscal Year 2014, adjusted for inflation.*

There is precedent for including supportive language on Safer Choice in your subcommittees' bill. The joint explanatory statement accompanying Division G of your FY21 bill included the following language:

*The Committees support the Safer Choice program and direct that the program be funded and operated consistent with prior years.*

Similar language also accompanied the FY20 Senate bill. Despite this clear direction from the committee, over the last four years, resources and leadership have been drained from Safer Choice.

For most of its existence, this unique and valuable program was organized within its own branch, staffed with as many as 13 full-time employees, including a branch chief, toxicologists and chemists. In the last quarter of 2020, EPA announced a reorganization of the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) whereby the Safer Choice branch was dissolved and most staff were reassigned to other areas of OCSPP. As a result, the program is now severely under-resourced with approximately four full-time staff. New leadership at EPA has taken steps to restore the program, but the agency faces resource constraints. We urge you to fully restore the Safer Choice Program – a broadly supported, and impactful recognition program that helps drive a market for safer chemicals and products.

Companies across the value chain utilize the Safer Choice brand to advance their individual safer chemical initiatives – from brand owners to retailers to chemical manufacturers. For example, chemical manufacturers have invested in the difficult task of developing safer chemicals now listed on the Safer

Choice's Safer Chemicals Ingredients List (SCIL). Having chemicals on the SCIL allows these manufacturers to offer best-in-class safer chemicals to the market that carry the robust third-party verification of the EPA. Brand owners and product manufacturers have invested in Safer Choice by undertaking the similarly resource-intensive effort to reformulate products using the SCIL to obtain Safer Choice certification. Major retailers specify the Safer Choice label as a way to verifiably meet corporate goals laid out in public-facing chemicals policies.

The Safer Choice Program also provides value to entities outside of the supply chain. Numerous states and municipalities rely on Safer Choice because it is the only third-party program that requires all ingredients to be screened for hazards instead of simply using a restricted substances list. Several state and local governments specify Safer Choice labeled products in their purchasing contracts as well as point to Safer Choice in public education campaigns and outreach. Non-governmental organizations and consumers find significant value in an authoritative government program that can be trusted to vet safer chemicals and products.

We believe that the Safer Choice Program provides a unique space for product innovation while maintaining high standards for health, safety, and functional use. Safe products that work are increasingly important as consumer awareness and concerns grow about the potential harm that many formulated consumer products can pose to their health and the environment.

The signatories to this letter represent a unique and broad group of chemical manufacturers, brand owners, environmental NGOs, states and municipalities. We respectfully urge you to quickly restore the Safer Choice Branch and its staffing to their previous levels so that they may stabilize the program and serve the constituency they have worked hard to build over the last decade.

Sincerely yours,

ABC Compounding Co., Inc.	City of San Francisco
Aicello America Corp	City of Santa Monica
Alternative Fuels & Chemicals Coalition	Clean Control Corporation
American Cleaning Institute	Clorox Company
Amway	Cole Hardware
BASF Corporation	Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute
Belle Aire Creations	CRC Industries, Inc.
Berkley Green	Defunkify
Beyond Benign	DeltaGreen Products, Inc.
Booyah Clean	Diamond Chemical
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners	Earth Friendly Products, ECOS
California Green Business Network	Ecolab, Inc.
Canberra Corporation	ECOS
Cascadia Consulting Group	Envirocon Technologies Inc (Lemi Shine)
ChemFORWARD	Environmental Biotech International

Environmental Council of the States	Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies
Environmental Defense Fund	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
EPA R7	Osprey Biotechnics
GOJO Industries, Inc.	Pollution Prevention Resource Center
Green Chemistry & Commerce Council	Procter & Gamble
Green Life Development, Inc.	PROSOCO
GreenBlue	PurposeBuilt Brands
Hartz Mountain Corporation	Reckitt Benckiser LLC
Henkel	Safer Chemicals Healthy Families
HLF Diversified Inc.	San Benito County Integrated Waste Management
Holloway House, Inc.	Sapient Living LLC
Household & Commercial Products Association	Scientific & Regulatory Consultants, Inc.
IFF	Sensitive Home
Industrial Chemical Solutions, LLC	Sozio Fragrances
inShield Wiper, LLC	Sozio, Inc.
ISSA-The Worldwide Association for the Cleaning Industry	Spartan Chemical Company, Inc.
Itaconix Corporation	SSB IP Holdings LLC
Jelmar, LLC	State Industrial Products
Lauren Kuby, Tempe City Council	Stepan
Levi Strauss & Co	Sunshine Makers, Inc.
Lighthouse for the Blind	Sustainable Works - Green Business Program
McFadden and Associates, LLC	The Ashkin Group LLC
Michigan Sustainable Business Forum	The Hate Stains Co.
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	ToxServices LLC
Momar, Incorporated	Vi-Jon, LLC
National Pollution Prevention Roundtable	Vinagreen, LLC
National Retail Federation	West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum
Native Green	Wexford Labs, Inc.
OMI Industries, Inc.	Whisk Products, Inc.
	Women's Voices for the Earth