



September 19, 2017

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper:

The Center for Science in the Public Interest writes to strongly oppose the nomination of Michael Dourson to lead the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

For decades, Dourson has consistently underestimated the health impacts of food chemicals, typically while he or his organization acted as a consultant, expert witness, or paid researcher for the food and chemical industries. In particular, Dourson or his firm's employees underestimated the potential harm of acrylamide (a carcinogen), diacetyl (a cause of lung disease), and perchlorate (which poses developmental risks), as well as pesticides linked to cancer or neurodevelopmental effects.

For example, after conducting a safety review of acrylamide, Dourson proposed a safety estimate that, according to the Center for Public Integrity and InsideClimate News, was *10 times less protective* of the public's health than the standard developed by EPA scientists. The study was funded by major food companies, including Burger King, Frito-Lay, KFC, and McDonald's.

Dourson's firm also sought to weaken the safety estimate for diacetyl, which can cause a fatal lung disease in workers, after receiving funding from a consortium of food companies, including Cargill, Coca-Cola, ConAgra, Frito-Lay, General Mills, J.M. Smucker, Land O'Lakes, Procter & Gamble, and Unilever. Employees of Dourson's firm proposed an occupational exposure limit of 200 parts per billion, which is *40 times less protective* than the standard recommended by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Moreover, in April 2016, Dourson testified for Croplife, the pesticide trade association. And, unlike the EPA staff scientists he would oversee (but consistent with the views of this administration's political appointees), he argued in favor of the continuing use of current levels of chlorpyrifos, a pesticide linked to brain damage. Dourson also proposed weak safety estimates for breakdown products of alachlor and acetochlor, two herbicides linked to cancer and banned in the European Union.

In light of his long record of seeking to weaken chemical safety protections on behalf of chemical industry clients, Michael Dourson should never have been nominated to lead that industry's primary regulator. I strongly urge you to reject his nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Lurie". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Peter G. Lurie, MD, MPH
President