Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 25, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Copy To: Administrator W. Craig Fugate
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street, S.W.
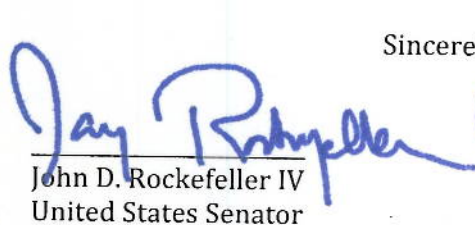Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Mr. President:

We write in full support of Governor Earl Ray Tomblin's request that you declare a major disaster for the State of West Virginia as a result of the devastating contamination of our State's water supply by a chemical spill that began on January 9, 2014.

As Governor Tomblin stated in his letter to you last week, the costs incurred by our wonderful citizens, our compassionate volunteer organizations, and our hardworking state and local agencies have been extraordinary. We appreciate your immediate action on January 10 in declaring an emergency disaster following this event and activating FEMA to help our State in direct response to this tragedy.
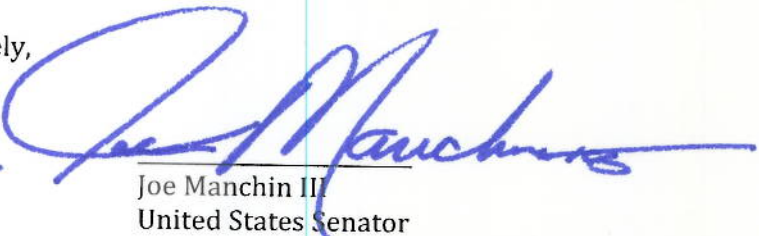
The chemical spill also greatly impacted our economy, our school systems, our hospitals, and many of our businesses across the affected region. While estimates of the impact to our economy have been calculated at $61 million, we expect the likely total economic impact to be far greater. School systems lost a significant amount of instructional days. Hospitals were forced to reschedule visits by their patients. Our businesses saw substantial revenue loss, while incurring vast costs to clean their facilities and recover from this crisis.

We respectfully ask that Governor Tomblin's request for a major disaster declaration be granted so that we can continue to recover from this event of national and international significance. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this important matter.
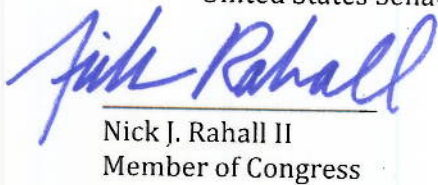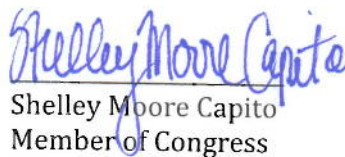
Sincerely,

John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

Nick J. Rahall II
Member of Congress

Shelley Moore Capito
Member of Congress

David B. McKinley
Member of Congress