United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 27, 2014

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy,

We understand that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the primary regulatory authority in regard to any releases of radioactive materials to the environment from the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

In this role, we understand that EPA is closely monitoring the radiological event. We appreciate that EPA has remained in contact with both the Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office and DOE Headquarters. We also appreciate your close coordination with EPA Region 6 and the State of New Mexico Environment Department to share information and streamline communications with DOE.

The health and safety of the Carlsbad community and WIPP personnel are our top priorities. It is critical to ensure the public has access to accurate, timely information. As such, we would appreciate EPA's analysis of this event, including an assessment of the amount of radiation that has been released into the atmosphere and how those releases compare to EPA standards of exposure that are considered safe and unsafe.

Additionally, we would like to request that EPA transport its own mobile environmental monitoring units to the WIPP site to conduct independent tests and studies to complement the monitoring assets already in the area. We appreciate the testing being done by DOE and other independent agencies, like the Carlsbad Environmental Monitoring and Research Center and believe the community would benefit from additional information on this situation so that they have the confidence they need that the appropriate federal agencies are providing all possible information and doing everything necessary to ensure their safety.

Going forward, we encourage you to continue working closely with DOE as the investigation of the release continues and any remediation efforts are conducted.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator