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Dr. Julie L. Gerberding
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30333

Re: ATSDR Monitoring Study

Dear Dr. Gerberding:

I am writing to ask for your help in assuring that an upcoming ATSDR monitoring study in Alexandria, Virginia, is carried out appropriately. This matter is urgent and a very high priority for our company.

At the request of the City of Alexandria, ATSDR is planning to conduct a study to monitor short-term ambient concentrations of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and particulate matter (PM) around Mirant's Potomac River Generating Plant to determine whether these emissions from the Plant could pose a health risk to certain populations. Unfortunately, both the City and ATSDR seem determined to press ahead on a schedule designed to find artificially high concentrations of SO₂ that, in less than a month, will be reduced substantially and permanently. An ATSDR sampling now would be based on conditions that will be substantially altered with further environmental investments at the plant. Thus, any analysis based on these samplings would not represent the long-term reality of the continued operations of the Potomac River Generating Station.

The Plant is currently subject to a temporary order from the Department of Energy (DOE) that requires it to operate at full capacity to ensure that there is a reliable supply of electricity for Washington, D.C. This order is scheduled to expire in less than a month (at the end of June) and will no longer be necessary because a new high voltage power line is being installed to carry power to Washington from other power plants. This line is within a few days of being completed. **Beginning on July 1, the plant will be operating under restrictions that will reduce its SO₂ emissions by approximately 40 percent.** The State Air Pollution Control Board recently imposed these restrictions in a

State Operating Permit that it said was a “bridge” to comprehensive operating permit that it said it would like to issue by October of this year.

We understand that the City and Congressman Jim Moran from Virginia, who is a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee for ATSDR, have been pressing ATSDR to proceed with the monitoring as soon as possible for the likely purpose of finding the highest possible levels around the plant. But ATSDR's sampling should not be tied to politics. Even though the Plant is in compliance with all environmental and other regulatory requirements, the City has made several attempts to shut it down the plant, only to be struck down by the courts, which have twice found that the City's actions are illegal.

In light of this background, it is perhaps not surprising that the City appears to be more interested in using (or misusing) ATSDR in its public attacks on the Plant than in providing science or health-based information to residents. As you may know, ATSDR completed an earlier study of the Plant's emissions based primarily on modeled estimates, rather than on monitored data. In a letter dated January 4, 2007 (attached), ATSDR informed the city that “Because of the uncertainty in the air dispersal model and the need to collect additional monitoring data, we cannot determine at this time if a public health hazard exists.” The letter then went on to discuss the additional data that ATSDR needed in order to make any reliable determination. However, based on a very selective reading of ATSDR's letter, the City issued a press release (attached) with the following heading:

**FEDERAL HEALTH AGENCY WARNS OF POTENTIAL HEALTH HAZARDS
FROM EXPOSURE TO MIRANT POWER PLANT EMISSIONS
Toxic Substances Office Advises City of Alexandria to Provide Health Messages for Vulnerable Populations**

The same press release included the following two paragraphs:

“This is one more piece of strong evidence that Mirant's continued operation of this outmoded, coal-fired power plant may be putting some residents at-risk,” said Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille. “The City of Alexandria will continue to pursue all available options to bring about the closure of this facility. I thank the Alexandria Health Department and the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry for their diligence in analyzing the available data and bringing forward this recommendation.”

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is a federal public health agency of the U.S. Department of Human Services. Its mission is to serve the public by using the best science, taking responsive public health actions, and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and disease related to toxic substances.

The City informed Mirant that this press release was reviewed and approved by ATSDR, even though the press release was a misrepresentation of ATSDR's January 4 letter.

We believe that ATSDR should be using good science and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and disease. We simply ask that, rather than rushing to monitor the highest possible and unrepresentative concentrations of a pollutant that we have worked, and continue to work, very hard to reduce, despite the efforts of others with political and economic agendas, ATSDR take a more reasoned, holistic, and relevant approach to its assessment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert E. Driscoll". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "R".

Robert E. Driscoll