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June 23, 2006

Dr. Holly Stallworth
Designated Federal Officer
Science Advisory Board
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL (stallworth.holly@epa.gov)

Dear Dr. Stallworth:

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) commends the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Science Advisory Board (SAB) for convening an expert panel to evaluate the complex scientific and technical issues that affect the hypoxic zone in the Northern Gulf of Mexico and the possible management and control options to reduce the extent and severity of this national problem. NACWA's nearly 300 publicly owned wastewater treatment utility members, many of which discharge into the Mississippi River Basin, are well aware of the hypoxia issue and are active participants in their local efforts to improve water quality. NACWA has reviewed the SAB's short list of candidates for the Hypoxia Advisory Panel and believes that it lacks the appropriate balance and breadth of expertise needed to address its charge.

Specifically, the panel does not include any real-world, wastewater treatment practitioners. While many of the highly-qualified candidates from academia may have some background in wastewater treatment, only one candidate has explicitly cited any experience in wastewater. Given the critical role wastewater treatment plants in the river basin are playing and will play in the efforts to control discharges of nitrogen and phosphorus, we feel participation from the municipal wastewater treatment community is vital.

NACWA did not weigh in on the make-up of the SAB panel in response to the original February 17, 2006, notice and understands if it is too late in the process to add more representatives. However, we do feel strongly that additional expertise from the wastewater treatment community would ensure a more balanced panel. We would be happy to provide you with the names of individuals who could serve on the panel.

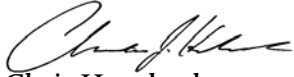
Dr. Holly Stallworth

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Please let me know if you would like to discuss further or would like us to identify a few individuals as possible candidates. I can be reached at 202/833-9106 or chornback@nacwa.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Hornback". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "H".

Chris Hornback

Director, Regulatory Affairs