

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

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March 29, 2019

Dr. Patrick Breysse
Director
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Center for Disease Control and Prevention
4770 Buford Highway NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

Dear Director Breysse,

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology is conducting oversight into the status of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR) toxicological profile of glyphosate. ATSDR announced its intent to develop a toxicological profile of glyphosate in the Federal Register on February 12, 2015.¹ In its notice, the Agency stated that the profile would be available to the public "on or about October 17, 2015," along with three other chemicals. The drafts for public comment for the other three chemicals – silica², antimony³, and 2,4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic Acid⁴ – were released in April of 2017. The web page for the glyphosate

¹ "Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry; Notice Of Intent To Develop Set 28 Toxicological Profiles," Federal Register, February 12, 2015, accessed here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/02/12/2015-02548/agency-for-toxic-substances-and-disease-registry-notice-of-intent-to-develop-set-28-toxicological>

² "Toxicological Profile for Silica Draft for Public Comment," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, April 2017, accessed here: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp211.pdf>

³ "Toxicological Profile for Antimony and Compounds Draft for Public Comment," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, April 2017, accessed here: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp23.pdf>

⁴ "Toxicological Profile for 2,4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic Acid (2,4-D) Draft for Public Comment," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, April 2017, accessed here: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/tp210.pdf>

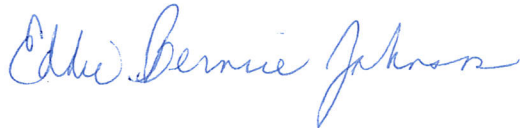
toxicological profile, however, still states that the timing of the review is set for August of 2017, and that a draft for public comment would be made available in 2018.⁵

To date, there has been no draft assessment of glyphosate published for public comment on ATSDR's website. Glyphosate is one of the most widely used chemicals in agriculture, and it is imperative that we fully understand all potential health impacts of a substance that is present in food on kitchen tables all across the United States. The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans" in 2015, a conclusion reached by independent experts reviewing 1,000 studies.⁶ Meanwhile, assessments of the herbicide at U.S. federal agencies have reached differing conclusions or not reached conclusions at all. Revelations from recent litigation involving glyphosate have raised disturbing allegations of agency "capture" by the chemical industry.⁷ For instance, a former official in EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs is quoted by a Monsanto employee as having said in 2015 that if he "can kill [the ATSDR investigation of glyphosate]," he "should get a medal."⁸ Almost four years later, a glyphosate assessment is yet to be published by ATSDR.

Now that the revised estimated publication year of 2018 has long since elapsed, the Committee is interested in an updated timeline of anticipated completion of ATSDR's toxicological profile of glyphosate. We are also requesting a staff-level briefing on the status of the profile.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this request, please have your staff contact Sara Palasits or Priyanka Hooghan on the Majority staff of the Science Committee at (202) 225-6375.

Sincerely,



Eddie Bernice Johnson

Chairwoman

Committee on Science, Space & Technology

Cc: Rep. Frank Lucas, Ranking Member, Committee on Science, Space & Technology

⁵ "Toxicological Profile for Glyphosates," NCEH/ATSDR Scientific Information Quality – Peer Review Agenda, February 2, 2018, accessed here: https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/peer_review/tox_profile_Glyphosates.html

⁶ "IARC Monograph on Glyphosate," World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer, March 2015, accessed here: <https://www.iarc.fr/featured-news/media-centre-iarc-news-glyphosate/>

⁷ Tessa Stuart, "Monsanto's EPA-Manipulating Tactics Revealed in \$289 Million Case," *Rolling Stone*, August 14, 2018, accessed here: <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/monsanto-cancer-710902/>

⁸ Joel Rosenblatt, Lydia Mulvany, and Peter Waldman, "EPA Official Accused of Helping Monsanto 'Kill' Cancer Study," *Bloomberg*, March 14, 2017, accessed here: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-03-14/monsanto-accused-of-ghost-writing-papers-on-roundup-cancer-risk>