

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2026

The Honorable Lee Zeldin Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

We are writing to urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to add microplastics to the recently published Sixth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 6) so that they are monitored under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Since its enactment, the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) has served as a cornerstone of federal public health protection, enabling the EPA to identify emerging contaminants, establish enforceable standards, and significantly reduce exposure to harmful substances in drinking water. By using SDWA authorities to monitor and ultimately regulate contaminants such as lead, disinfection byproducts, and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), the EPA has repeatedly demonstrated that early detection and transparent monitoring are essential to preventing long-term health harms.

As plastic production continues to expand rapidly, microplastics pose a potential threat to public health in the United States. Emerging research demonstrates that microplastics are now pervasive in the human body and are associated with serious adverse health effects. Concentrations of microplastics in human brain tissue have been reported to increase by nearly 50 percent between 2016 and 2024.¹ A recent study documented plastic masses in the brain on the order of 4,800 micrograms, roughly the weight of a plastic spoon.² Once microplastics accumulate in human tissues, there is currently no known safe, effective, and scalable method to remove them from the body.

Microplastic contamination has been linked to a wide range of harms affecting multiple organ systems. Studies associate microplastics with lung disease, increased risk of heart attack and stroke, and impaired kidney and liver function.³ Some studies have also attributed higher concentrations of microplastics in the brain to degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia. With the rate at which plastic concentration in the brain has been rising, these risks are only likely to increase.

In recognition of the urgent need for federal action, a bipartisan group of members recently introduced the bicameral Microplastics Safety Act (HR 4486), which directs the FDA to study microplastic contamination and

¹<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/the-human-brain-may-contain-as-much-as-a-spoons-worth-of-microplastics-new-research-suggests-180985995/>

²<https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/03/health/plastics-inside-human-brain-wellness/index.html#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThe%20concentrations%20we%20saw%20in,standard%20plastic%20spoon%2C%20Campen%20s aid.>

³<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10826726/> <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/microplastics-linked-to-increased-risk-for-heart-attack-stroke-study-finds#The-bottom-line>
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0269749123019115#:~:text=In%20this%20case%2C%20pollutants%20with,w hich%20MPs%20impact%20human%20health.>
[https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004896972401101X#:~:text=Microplastics%20\(MPs\) %20have%20been%20detected,for%20MP%2Dinduced%20liver%20injury.](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004896972401101X#:~:text=Microplastics%20(MPs) %20have%20been%20detected,for%20MP%2Dinduced%20liver%20injury.)

its health impacts in food and water. This legislation demonstrates the strong congressional interest – from both sides of the aisle – in better understanding how microplastics affect Americans’ health. The Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) recently launched its Systematic Targeting Of MicroPlastics (STOMP) program to develop tools to measure and remove microplastics from the body. The federal government must have a unified strategy to address this challenge, and the EPA has a critical role to play as the primary agency regulating drinking water.

The American people strongly support decisive federal action to address microplastics. A recent national poll found that 79 percent of American adults view microplastics as a human health crisis that requires immediate action.⁴ This concern cuts across party affiliation, race, gender, and age, making microplastics one of the most unifying public health and environmental issues facing the nation today. Failure to act in the face of this clear scientific evidence and broad public consensus places Americans at increasing and avoidable risk.

Accordingly, we urge the EPA to add microplastics to UCMR 6 and to design a robust, nationwide monitoring program for microplastics in drinking water. Doing so will provide critical transparency regarding exposure, inform future health-protective standards under SDWA, and help ensure that the federal government meets its responsibility to protect the health and safety of the American people.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Janelle S. Bynum
Member of Congress



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



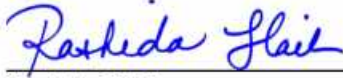
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



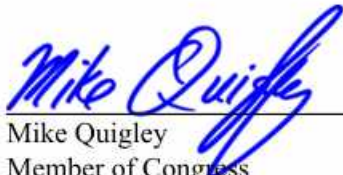
Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



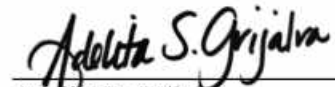
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Adenta S. Grijalva
Member of Congress




Jesús G. "Chuy" Garcia
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



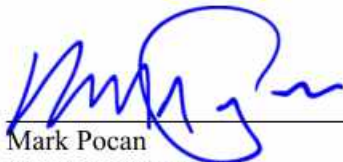
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



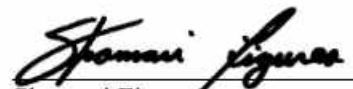
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



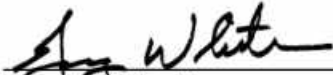
Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



George Whitesides
Member of Congress



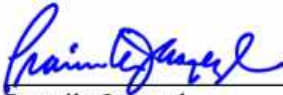
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



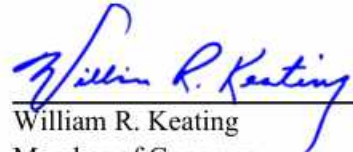
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



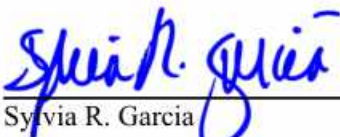
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



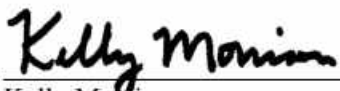
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress




Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



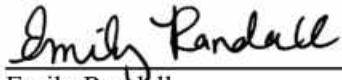
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress




André Carson
Member of Congress



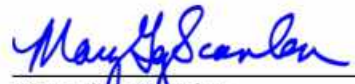
Emily Randall
Member of Congress



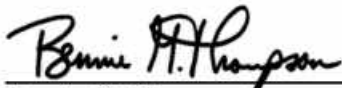
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



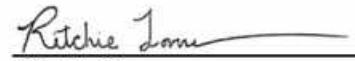
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress




Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



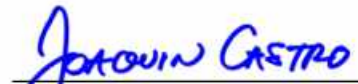
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress




Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



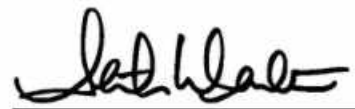
Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



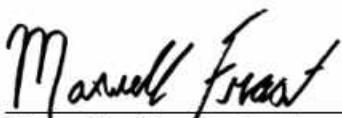
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



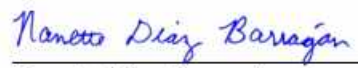
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



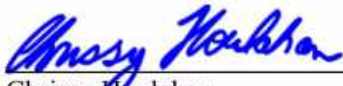
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress




Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator




Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



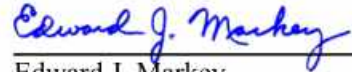
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



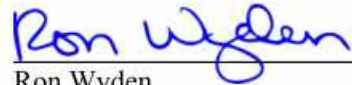
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



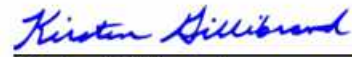
Maxine Dexter, M.D.
Member of Congress



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator