

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 13, 2019

Peter D. Lopez
Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 2
290 Broadway
New York, NY 10007-1866

Dear Regional Administrator Lopez:

We write in regard to recent drinking water sampling results taken on August 6 at two Newark residences. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), these results concluded that a number of samples, taken from filtered water, had levels of lead that exceed the applicable federal and state drinking water standard. As a result, EPA has called on the City of Newark and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to advise residents with known or suspected lead service lines to use bottled water for drinking and cooking until further notice. As the City of Newark and the State of New Jersey take steps to ensure the safety of Newark residents, we write to request additional assistance from EPA in those efforts.

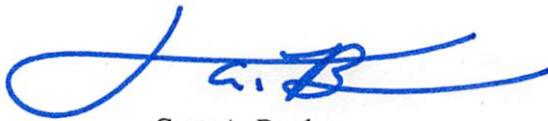
The State of New Jersey has provided bottled water supplies to the City of Newark, and distribution has already begun. While the expanded sampling of filtration devices is underway, the primary concern of all parties is the safety and well-being of Newark's residents and the need to limit vulnerable populations' potential yet unnecessary exposure to lead in filtered water. The DEP has expressed to EPA that their emergency water supplies are limited and has requested additional support from EPA. While we appreciate the technical assistance EPA has provided to the City of Newark to date, we urge EPA to identify additional resources to offer assistance in providing bottled water to Newark residents in order to ensure a sustained source of clean drinking water while further sampling is conducted.

It is our understanding that EPA worked with the DEP and the City of Newark while the city's plan to distribute filters to affected residences was developed and implemented. In DEP and Newark's technical consultation with EPA, the agency previously spoke to the reliability of the water filters, citing a peer reviewed study on the effectiveness of the filters in removing lead in drinking water in Flint, Michigan. In light of sampling results exceeding standards in two of three filters tested in the City of Newark, DEP and the city, at EPA's urging and out of an abundance of caution, have taken immediate action and invested resources to implement a solution. We believe you have a shared responsibility to be a part of that solution.

Given your commitment to safeguard the residents of Newark and to advance the goal of protecting public health and the environment, we respectfully request your immediate assistance in identifying any and all options to provide not only technical assistance, but on the ground

support and resources in Newark until further analysis is concluded and a solution to these new concerns is implemented. This includes, but is not limited to, the deployment of bottled water to the city for distribution to affected residents. Our offices stand ready to assist in those efforts and any efforts to protect the city and its residents from further unnecessary exposure. We appreciate your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress