

JESÚS "CHUY" GARCÍA

4TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

2334 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
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RAILROADS, PIPELINES, AND HAZARDOUS  
MATERIALS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC

May 29, 2026

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency  
Director James Jennings  
2520 West Iles Avenue, P.O. Box 19276  
Springfield, IL 62794

Dear Director Jennings,

I write to request a transparent and comprehensive public assessment of the Koppers Inc. fire that occurred on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, in the 3900 block of South Laramie on the Cicero/Stickney border.

This incident has raised significant concerns among residents, local officials, first responders, and businesses regarding potential environmental contamination, public health impacts, emergency response procedures, and regulatory compliance.

We commend the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) for announcing its launch of an investigation into the incident. Residents of the area deserve timely and accurate information about the circumstances of this event, especially as summer approaches. The health and safety of our community depends on a full and ongoing assessment of this incident. In addition to an immediate investigation, residents should be made aware of any available resources or support services if contaminants are found on their property as a result of this incident.

I respectfully ask that the Illinois EPA provide a detailed public record report addressing the following:

1. The cause of the fire, to the extent currently known, and the status of any ongoing investigations from prior incidents at the facility;
2. The types and quantities of chemicals involved in the incident;
3. Air, soil, and water monitoring data collected before, during, and after the fire;
4. Any detected releases of hazardous substances and their potential impacts on public health and the environment;
5. Actions taken by Koppers Inc., local authorities, and state agencies to contain the incident;
6. Illinois EPA's assessment of the facility's compliance with applicable environmental laws, regulations, permits, and safety requirements;
7. Any enforcement actions under consideration or already initiated;

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8. Recommendations for preventing similar incidents in the future; and
9. Plans for the closure of the Koppers Inc site.

In addition, I urge the Illinois EPA to ensure that all relevant environmental monitoring data, findings, and updates are made readily accessible to the public, including in different languages. Community trust depends on transparent communication, especially when residents may have concerns regarding air quality, drinking water safety, and long-term environmental consequences.

I also request that the Illinois EPA engage directly with affected communities through public meetings, briefings, and opportunities for residents to ask questions and receive clear answers.

As elected representatives, we have a responsibility to ensure that government agencies and regulated facilities are held accountable and that the public receives complete and accurate information. I appreciate the Illinois EPA's efforts to protect public health and the environment and look forward to your prompt response regarding these matters.

Please provide a written update by June 17, 2026.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

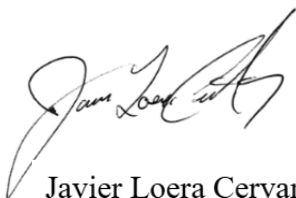
Sincerely,



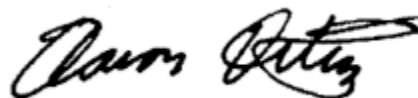
Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress  
Illinois' 4th Congressional District



Celina Villanueva  
State Senator  
Illinois' 11th State Senate District



Javier Loera Cervantes  
Illinois State Senator  
1st Senate District



Aaron Ortiz  
State Representative  
Illinois' 1st State House District

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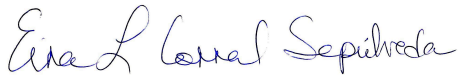
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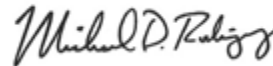
Edgar Gonzalez, Jr.  
State Representative  
Illinois' 21st State House District



Alma E. Anaya  
Commissioner  
Cook County's 7th District



Eira L. Corral Sepúlveda  
Commissioner  
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District



Michael D. Rodriguez  
Alderman  
City of Chicago's 22nd Ward