

Executive Summary*

From the Scoping Paper on Potential Labor and Environmental Health Advocate
Collaboration

July 2005

How do we tell a convincing story about the need for chemical policy reform?

How do we create the vision of a happy ending of green chemical production at facilities that now pose a terrible risk to the surrounding communities?

How do we construct the narrative so chemical industry workers and their unions are actively engaged in the chemical policy reform effort along with health groups, environmentalists and environmental health activists, neighborhood leaders and local elected officials?

And how can we build such coalitions so they allow for ongoing progressive change?

In many cities and states, chemical security may well serve as the best first chapter in that story. There are 15,000 chemical facilities in 50 states that must report their worst case chemical disaster scenarios to the EPA. Of these, almost 8,000 pose an “offsite consequence” to more than 1,000 people and more than 100 plants could harm potentially a million or more. Each of these facilities represents a timely grassroots opportunity to highlight not only the potential for devastating terrorist activity and a White House and chemical industry asleep at the wheel, but also a blue-green, labor-environmentalist organizing opportunity to address the chemical security issue as a local and state imperative.

* the full paper follows the Executive Summary

For environmental health advocates working in both policy and market arenas, chemical security offers an opportunity to advance existing campaigns on green chemistry and inherent safety; a high profile parallel and compliment to existing campaign efforts on state and federal chemical policy reform; and a meaningful strategic opening to engage with organized labor within a shared agenda. For organized labor, chemical security campaigns can achieve reduced workplace exposures, safer communities and ultimately, increased job security in the evolving chemical industry marketplace.

Although there are currently a few local and state campaigns on chemical security, the majority of campaign investment to date has been through a national legislative effort coordinated between DC-based environmental groups and the leadership of some international unions. While the national work has garnered the attention of the national news media and Congress, for their part environmental organizations have acknowledged that what’s missing in the chemical security campaign is a strong grassroots component.

This scoping paper concludes that a multi-layered collaborative campaign needs to be undertaken on a local, state, and national level. The campaign should be focused on high hazard facilities and the transport of hazardous materials and dovetailed with environmental health advocates' efforts on reforming state and federal chemical policy. Such a campaign would:

- Replicate the recent successful Washington DC effort to ban the rail transport of highly hazardous cargo through the city;
- Utilize local unions and state environmental groups to catalyze constituent support for strong national chemical security legislation in critical Congressional districts;
- Advance the green chemistry and inherent safety agenda through high profile local campaigns targeting wastewater treatment plants currently using chlorine rather than safer substitutes; and
- Reframe Homeland Security as a progressive blue-green value that truly protects communities, reduces workplace hazards and drives innovation in the chemical industry.

Based on this campaign framework and specifics contained within the body of the report, two following priority investments are recommended.

Funding for an Environmental Health Campaign Coordinator, a Labor Campaign Coordinator and a National Strategy Summit

With respect to initial staging of the campaign effort, funding should support an environmental health coordinator to convene talks with the United Steelworkers (USW) to determine the specifics of how they would direct and prioritize funding their own participation in a collaborative chemical security campaign. The coordinator would bring initial mapping of the existing chemical security efforts and the environmental community's current campaign involvement into these discussions but the outcome will be to assess the best position or individual within the USW structure to facilitate campaign efforts. As part of this labor engagement, it is expected that the USW will develop a coordinator position to oversee these efforts, attract additional labor partners, and work in concert with the environmental health coordinator to develop and coordinate the overall chemical security campaign jointly implemented by environmental health and organized labor groups.

Both coordinators will then convene a National Strategy Summit with appropriate labor and environmental and environmental health organizations to get input on development of a national chemical security campaign plan that identified key state and local targets for transport and facility hazard reduction, a Capitol Hill strategy that maps key congressional districts to mobilize constituent support for national chemical legislation, and lead groups to play implementation roles. Cities such as Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and the State of California are all considering re-routing or

greater regulation of the transport of hazmats, especially by rail of ultra-hazardous materials while mayors of 49 cities have asked the federal government for advance notice of hazardous shipments through potential “target” areas.

Development of campaigns in these areas and mobilization of environmentalists and relevant local unions would help build a base of support that could secure early campaign wins and be mobilized to press for specific Congressional action when chemical security legislation reaches the House and Senate floor. With wastewater treatment plants in or near virtually every dense population center, and conversion costs minimal, numerous campaigns targeting conversion or transport restrictions could be developed and implemented around the US. These campaigns would build additional momentum toward federal mandates for safer materials substitution, thereby complimenting environmental health policy efforts to win chemical phase outs at the state and national level. The chemical security campaign coordinators will develop all this information into a strategic plan for the overall campaign. This plan will serve both as a long term guide for foundation investment as well as non-profit organizing. It would also provide the content for possible development of an ongoing Blue Green Working Group on chemical security.

New Jersey Work Environment Council

An active player on chemical security, New Jersey Work Environment Council (NJWEC) will be a significant contributor to the National Strategy Summit and should be supported early in national campaign planning. NJWEC already has a well developed labor and environmental collaboration in this chemical intensive state. Their efforts will help set the model for other state efforts to be developed through the National Strategy Summit. Direct support to NJWEC will provide for a full time campaigner to implement a chemical security campaign that is integrated with other campaign strategies occurring nationwide. The goal of the New Jersey Work Environment Council’s Chemical Security program is to develop and win new state policies to ensure chemical site safety and security in NJ. Such policies should employ “inherent” – or built-in – occupational and environmental safeguards as well as expanded worker and local union participation. WEC also believes effective chemical security must include comprehensive evaluation of facility vulnerabilities, including both physical site security and inherent safety – with an eye toward developing safer, “greener” processes.

WEC maintains that workers are in a unique position to identify and prevent chemical site vulnerabilities and to recommend inherently safer approaches. Because of their concerns about workplace safety and health, they routinely point out hazards to management. Workers also are often required to respond during emergencies, and in doing so, function as their community’s critical line of defense in the event of a disaster. Workers and their unions are therefore vital partners for plant safety and security.

Other state efforts should be considered for funding based on the outcomes of the National Strategy Summit and the findings of the strategic campaign plan developed by the coordinators. Once the Strategy Summit is complete, groups will have identified their

campaign plans and will be seeking support to carry them out. These plans will make up the foundation of the national chemical security effort for legislative reform. Only a multi-state, organization and tactic funding investment that supports concurrent campaigning will successfully raise the profile of American hazardous chemical dependency and facilitate development of local, state and federal solutions to protect national security and transition to green chemistry.

In conclusion, the chemical security issue offers environmental and worker health advocates the opportunity to reframe homeland security as a progressive value. National labor unions and grassroots environmental organizations are well placed to generate constituent support for safety- and solution-oriented legislative initiatives around chemical security. A coordinated campaign organized out of labor and environmental camps can achieve real grassroots mobilization at the local and state level and toward key congressional members considering strong national legislation. It nicely complements and builds on existing strategies and collaborations to phase out chemicals dangerous to the general public and workers by exploiting the chemical industry and the Bush Administration on their most visible vulnerability: potential terrorist attacks on chemical facilities. The Bush Administration resists regulation of their political and financial supporters in the chemical and transportation industries despite widespread public support for better controls to prevent terrorism. Properly constructed, coordinated and implemented, a chemical security campaign would be the most currently relevant and compelling entry point into a real public dialogue around inherent safety and green chemistry, guiding principles of a worker protection and environmental health agenda.

Potential Labor and Environmental Health Advocate Collaboration

A Scoping Paper by Paul Bogart

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I. Overview

The goal of this scoping project is to explore areas of strategically significant collaboration between organized labor and environmental health advocates. This idea is not, of course, a new one. Such collaborations have been tried with varying degrees of success many times over the past three decades. The current national political climate however, has injected a new strategic necessity into expanding the influence of NGOs and unions. Environmental organizations and organized labor have responded accordingly. Beyond the streets of Seattle where the WTO brought labor and environmental concerns together and demonstrated the raw potential of a new shared power, unions and environmental organizations have taken steps to broaden their base and incorporate new alliances into their work.

As the percentage of organized workers continues to decline, especially in the private sector, the labor movement as a whole is preoccupied with the need to organize and enlarge their numbers. This has engendered many experimental approaches to recruiting new members, creating a more sympathetic social political environment, and improving the legal climate for their growth.

For example, the Apollo Alliance is a national umbrella coalition linking the AFL-CIO with environmental, business, urban, and Faith based communities in support of good jobs and energy independence.

The United Steelworkers has launched a pilot Associate Member program. The Associate Member program seeks to incorporate non-union members who traditionally have been excluded from union participation into their ranks. Among their stated goals is to:

“build a dynamic new movement to organize statewide and national campaigns to

end the senseless exporting of American jobs, form “blue-green” (labor and environmental alliances), guarantee health care...”

The newly merged UNITE-HERE union of laundry, restaurant, and hotel workers has a collaborative effort with the Sierra Club which has produced some working relationships around specific projects for some of the local clubs and unions. These parallel efforts reflect a shared recognition that new collaborations are especially timely and mutually beneficial.

The Service Employees International Union and the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees have launched health care worker organizing campaigns that first involved the broader community demand that hospital chains provide equitable care and treat their employees in an equitable manner.

And finally at the international level, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has help to create Sustainlabour, an organization designed to stimulate environmental knowledge, programming, and participation in societal fora on the part of international union secretariats and national labor union federations. This is an independent non-profit foundation whose board is derived from the leadership of national union federations from Johannesburg to Madrid, to Brasilia and many countries in between.

The news has not all been good however. Concrete campaign victories remain few and far between, and too many collaborative efforts appear to begin and end with a simple endorsement of each others efforts. New collaborations between labor and other civil society organizations will be most successful and lasting only if they build power for each movement

It has been many years since the environment was high on labor’s agenda. Current pressures have only exacerbated the situation and environmental issues have never been lower than today within the AFL-CIO’s priorities.

Yet, there is a post election recognition that with our current degree of organization neither labor nor environmental organizations can achieve our goals alone. Only through more effective social outreach and collaboration can the environmental movement secure regulatory changes in “red” states and at the federal level. This outreach and support is likely only when more workers are represented by unions allowing for the kind of power that work place organizations can bring to social issues such as the environment.

But it must be understood that beyond the largely symbolic sign-on to one another’s campaigns, real collaboration must build shared goals into the design of the campaign so that a victory reaps tangible benefits for both environmental and union partners. The incorporation of a shared agenda and strategy from the earliest stages of campaign design and execution will result not only in an increase in trust and communication between labor and environmental advocates, it will demonstrate both internally and externally the real political utility of collaboration.

There are many worthwhile and necessary opportunities to engage in “Blue-Green” dialogue. The focus of this report, however, is the identification of specific collaborative campaign opportunities that will yield tangible goals and advance the overall strategies of both environmental health advocates and organized labor.

This report identifies opportunities in which: there is existing involvement or substantial initial interest from both environmental and labor organizations; a genuine political, market or strategic opportunity to win; and the potential to successfully replicate the campaign on a national, regional or local level so a win in one area can be leveraged to win in another.

Based upon meetings with unions and environmental NGO’s, the following campaign areas merit further development and investment from the funding community: chemical security and environmentally preferable cleaning products.

The chemical security issue offers environmental and worker health advocates the opportunity to reframe homeland security as a progressive value. Such campaigns would build on existing strategies and collaborations to phase out chemicals dangerous to the general public and workers by exploiting the chemical industry and the Bush Administration on their most visible vulnerability: potential terrorist attacks on chemical facilities. The Bush Administration resists regulation of their political and financial supporters in the chemical and transportation industries despite widespread public support for better controls to prevent terrorism. Properly constructed and implemented, a chemical security campaign would be the most currently relevant and compelling entry point into a real public dialogue around inherent safety and green chemistry.

An effective cleaning products collaborative campaign has a high potential to leverage a market ripe for change. In the last five years, the effectiveness and availability of environmentally preferably cleaning products has expanded dramatically. Consequently, some state and local environmentally preferable purchasing programs have begun to require safer cleaning chemicals in their procurement contracts. An intentional collaborative campaign could be organized within a wide variety of settings where unions and/or environmental NGO’s are active: commercial office buildings, hotels, health care facilities and schools. This would support additional efforts to win environmentally preferable purchasing programs in cities and states, expand these efforts to the private sector group purchasing organizations (GPO’s) and would have an immediate positive benefit for tens of thousands of at-risk workers.

II. Chemical Security: Eliminating Risk through Materials Substitution and Inherent Safety

The issue of chemical security is currently the most resonant and high-profile opportunity for collaborative campaigning between organized labor and environmental health advocates. Chemical security offers a variety of ways for either labor or environmental

health organizers to engage depending on their particular influence and mission. They can work to eliminate the transport of hazardous materials, to reduce or eliminate onsite chemical facility risks through material substitution and inherent safety programs, organize members of Congress to endorse national legislation on chemical security, and build support for chemical policy reform on state, national and international levels.

Specifically, for both policy and market environmental health advocates, chemical security offers a way to advance existing campaigns on green chemistry and inherent safety. While for organized labor, chemical security campaigns can achieve reduced workplace exposures, safer communities and ultimately job security in the evolving chemical industry marketplace.

Although there are currently a small number of local and state campaigns on various aspects of the chemical security issue, the majority of campaign investment to date has been through a national legislative effort coordinated between DC-based national environmental groups and the leadership of some international unions. While the national work has garnered the attention of the national news media and Congress, a multi-layered campaign undertaken on a local, state, as well as a national level could yield even more significant results. For instance, a number of national environmental groups have state and local offices which in conjunction with union locals across the country could launch coordinated state and municipal campaigns targeting specific facilities or key congressional districts in support of national legislation. Unions are, by their very nature and structure, essentially grassroots organizations and as such, are well positioned to participate in a broad collaborative chemical security campaign. National environmental organizations have acknowledged that despite their success, what's missing in the chemical security campaign is a strong grassroots component. Chemical security is a made-for-grassroots issue. There are 15,000 chemical facilities in 50 states that must report their worst case chemical disaster scenarios to the EPA. Of these, almost 8,000 pose an "offsite consequence" to more than 1,000 people and more than 100 plants could potentially harm a million or more. Each of these facilities represents a grassroots opportunity to highlight not only the potential for devastating terrorist activity and a White House and chemical industry asleep at the wheel, but also a blue-green organizing opportunity to address the chemical security issue as a local and state imperative. Acting locally and replicating campaigns nationally will organically expand the public dialogue about reducing the risks posed by current chemical facilities.

On a state level, the best model of integrated campaigning among organized labor and environmentalists is the New Jersey Work and Environment Council. The composition of NJWEC's board, the development of their agenda, and execution of their work embodies a true partnership between these two constituencies. They are already investing significant resources in this effort and are in the process of hiring a chemical security campaigner to work on this issue. They have the right structure to launch a major effort on chemical security in a chemical manufacturing intensive state. New Jersey Senator Corzine, sponsor of last year's unsuccessful chemical security bill – a version of which has been reintroduced – is running for governor. This completes the trifecta: a chemical security campaign in a chemical intensive state, a well developed labor and

environmental collaboration working on the issue, and possible support from a likely governor who has already spoken to chemical security in the national political discourse. While the New Jersey campaign cannot be replicated in other states overnight, it should serve as a model for how new state efforts should be constructed and funding should be directed to supplement and sustain their work.

Below are potential opportunities to engage in a broad based collaborative effort on chemical security:

Blue-Green Chemical Security Working Group

The recent merger between the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) and the Paper and Allied Chemical Employees (PACE) into a single United Steelworkers union (USW) has resulted in the vast majority of organized chemical workers being organized under one union. Representing the former members of the Steelworkers and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, the merger has brought together two of the most traditionally progressive industrial unions in North America. This strategic merger, in conjunction with an ongoing national commitment by the USW to build alliances with environmentalists on a wide range of issues offers an excellent opportunity to build a meaningful and effective partnership on chemical security.

Over the last year the Steelworkers have constructed statewide blue-green alliances in Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Washington, Oregon and Ohio. Recently, the USW joined with the Sierra Club to build and promote a national strategic alliance. Together they have formed active blue-green working groups on trade and energy. Also, the USW and the Sierra Club have expressed strong interest in joining with the environmental health community to build a working group on chemical security. Such a working group would signal a breakthrough on toxic-related issues: for the first time in a generation a major union would be willing to partner with environmentalists in the struggle to reduce toxics and other hazardous substances.

To build such a working group would require the following:

1. Identify key groups from the environmental health movement who would be able and willing to participate in the process.
2. Develop for the working group a draft strategic planning paper that would set short, medium and long terms goals and identify key state, local and national opportunities for effective joint work on chemical security issues.
3. Develop and pilot alliance-building workshops designed to bring together union and environmental health advocates around chemical security.
4. Identify labor and environmental coordinators to staff the working group
5. Work closely with the USW to make certain the working group has strong participation and backing from the union's leadership.
6. Hold a mini-summit between the union and environmental health advocates to review the strategic plan and initiate the working group process.
7. Raise funds to support the development of the working group, its coordination

and its alliance-building education.

The working group has the potential to bring together hundreds of local unions representing workers at hazardous chemical sites together with concerned communities and environmental health advocates. It also could develop considerable support for local, state and national policy efforts aimed at reducing such hazards. Along the way it could become the leading blue-green advocate group for green chemistry and a REACH-like policy regime for the US.

Transport of Hazardous Chemicals

The annual transport of some 83 million tons of hazardous materials shipped over 170,000 miles of railway looms as one of the most significant vulnerabilities in homeland security. Even in the absence of intentional sabotage, the transport of hazardous materials poses significant risks for communities. The recent accident in South Carolina involving the release of chlorine gas from a rail tanker resulted in the deaths of nine people, including the train engineer, injured others, and forced the evacuation of many more. National news reports revealed the chaos in responding to the leak and a frightening lack of preparedness for what is not an uncommon event, the derailling of a train car. In fact there have been several chlorine tanker de-railings in the last five years, resulting in panic, deaths and evacuations.

At a recent Congressional hearing on chemical security, Carolyn Merritt, the Chairperson of the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) testified that:

“In the time we have been in existence, we have learned something very troubling. The incidents we have investigated at the U.S. Chemical Safety Board have revealed serious gaps in the preparations for major chemical releases by companies, emergency responders, government authorities, and the public. These gaps in preparedness leave Americans vulnerable.”

To date, the transport issue has proven to be both an effective and high profile entry point for work on chemical security and inherent safety. Organizers can exploit the Bush Administration’s collusion with the transport and chemical industry to prevent meaningful progress toward homeland security, an issue that resonates with the public. Meanwhile, in spite of warnings from the CSB, FBI, EPA, Naval Research Lab and others that more than 100,000 people could be killed or injured in the event of a terrorist attack on a rail car of hazardous chemicals passing through a major city; the Bush administration has failed to address the problem.

Recently, the Administration went so far as to side with CSX Railroad in an unsuccessful attempt to block a District of Columbia ordinance requiring notification or re-routing of highly hazardous cargo away from the city. A number of national environmental groups including Greenpeace, NRDC, Clean Water Action, NET, FOE, US PIRG and others worked in coalition to successfully support passage of the D.C. ordinance. Among the local groups working on this in the District, the DC Central Labor Council generated

thousands of emails in favor of the successful Council vote. CSX has appealed the court's decision affirming the right of the city to take appropriate measures to protect its citizens.

On the national scene, environmental groups and unions urged legislators to support the federal Extremely Hazardous Materials Transportation Security Act (H.R. 1414).

Representative Edward Markey's (D-MA) hazmat and chemical security bills were incorporated in an amendment to the Dept. of Homeland Security authorization bill on the House floor, which was voted down on a party-line vote on May 18th. The growing unity among Democrats on this issue is a recognition that the Bush administration's inaction to date is becoming a political liability.

Meanwhile, Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE) is drafting a hazmat rail security bill with re-routing for introduction in the Senate. In the 108th Congress he collaborated with Senator John McCain (R-AZ) to enact rail security legislation primarily geared toward passenger trains.

Locally, cities such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and the State of California are all considering re-routing or greater regulation of the transport of hazmats, especially by rail of ultra-hazardous materials.

Both the D.C. model ordinance and federal legislation offer opportunities to expand environmental and organized labor partnerships. Specifically, elements of the D.C. ordinance could be replicated in a number of cities across the country. In January, mayors of 49 cities signed a letter to Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta requesting advance notice of hazardous shipments through potential "target" areas. Teamsters and train workers represented by the Amalgamated Transport Workers Union (ATU) could be integrated into such a transport campaign.

Wastewater Treatment Plants

Although wastewater treatment plants account for a small percentage of chlorine use, they likely represent the highest volume of chlorine transported by rail through highly populated communities. Successful community campaigns focused on conversion of wastewater treatment facilities away from the use of chlorine to non-toxic or non-explosive technologies would positively impact both transportation and facility security. These campaigns would also provide concrete, easily replicable examples of the wisdom of reducing risk through a materials substitution strategy.

One example of an already successful conversion is the Blue Plains Treatment Facility in the Washington D.C. area. Following the 9/11 attacks, it took only eight weeks to eliminate its use of chlorine. The conversion eliminated the regular shipment and site presence of 90 ton rail cars of chlorine and ultimately cost less than \$.50 per year per water customer. The U.S. Naval Research laboratory estimated that the catastrophic release of a single tank car of chlorine in metropolitan D.C. could injure or kill 100,000

people within an hour. With wastewater treatment plants in or near virtually every dense population center, and conversion costs minimal, numerous campaigns targeting conversion or transport restrictions could be launched by environmental organizations and unions across the U.S. Indeed this is the stated fear of the railroad and chemical industry, that a patch work of regulations would severely restrict their movement of highly hazardous chemicals.

Representative Edward Markey (D-MA) in the House and Senator Jim Jeffords (I-VT) are drafting legislation to fund the conversion of chlorine gas used at municipally owned sewage treatment facilities to safer technologies as recommended by a March, 2005 Government Accountability Office report which identified this vulnerability and urged increased federal funding. This legislation may be less difficult to enact than broader chemical security legislation and could also help establish an important precedent for requiring safer alternatives to chlorine, such as, ultra-violet (UV) light, ozone and sodium hypochlorite (bleach).

Municipal, State and National Legislation.

National labor unions and grassroots environmental organizations are well placed to generate constituent support for legislative initiatives around chemical security. To date, their support has been, with some exceptions, limited to endorsement of the position taken by the lead national environmental organizations. Real participation and mobilization from a grassroots level aimed at targeting key congressional members would be a significant addition to this campaign. An effective national campaign should start by focusing organizing in areas where we have on-the-ground strength that coincides with key states and districts tied to relevant congressional Committees considering strong legislation.

Some background to chemical security legislation is useful to understand the evolution of this issue in Congress and the strategic potential for blue-green collaboration.

Immediately following 9/11 Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ) introduced a new version of a bill originally drafted by Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) in 2000. The bill was relatively modest, requiring facilities that pose an “off site consequence” to assess the use of safer technologies or chemicals. If they deemed safer technologies or chemicals too costly, they simply had to prove that to the EPA. It should be noted that no version of this bill in the Senate or the House (Pallone/Markey) has ever actually proposed banning or even phasing out the production or use of ultra-hazardous chemicals such as chlorine the way industry has suggested.

The Corzine bill eventually won unanimous approval by the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee in July, 2002 but was never made part of the Homeland Security Act. The chemical and oil industry have been very successful at painting the Corzine bill as extreme, especially in the minds of congressional Republicans and some Democrats from agriculture or chemical industry dominated states and districts.

The Corzine bill was reintroduced in the newly Republican controlled Senate in 2003 and was eventually replaced by a pro-industry, do-nothing bill offered by Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) in a party-line vote in the EPW Committee in October, 2004.

In 2005 Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), the chair of the Government Affairs Committee which has jurisdiction over Homeland Security, announced her commitment to pursuing chemical security legislation. Her success in shepherding the 9/11 bill through Congress has won her surprising influence for a moderate Republican in a conservative Republican party. In addition, several deadly accidents (two chlorine rail accidents and the Illiopolis PVC fire) combined with revelations of former Bush administration officials (Richard Falkenrath, Christine Whitman) have added renewed urgency to this issue as we approach the fourth anniversary of 9/11. At a minimum, these circumstances assure greater attention to legislation in Congress and locally.

The April 27th House Homeland Security Committee and May 18th House floor vote were almost entirely party-line votes. Growing unity among Democrats and serious consideration by moderate Republicans increase the pressure on the Bush administration and set the stage for an unpredictable 109th Congress.

While the Republican leadership remains opposed to chemical security legislation, there is also a danger that they will adopt a bill in “name only” just to claim they have addressed the threat. Alternatively, a major attack or chemical accident could leave the industry begging for a bill as moderate as the Corzine bill. The increased profile on this issue combined with an increase in perceived political vulnerability demonstrates the need for regular and effective blue-green constituent engagement.

Representative Frank Pallone (D-NJ) who recently re-introduced his chemical security bill (H.R. 2237) has announced plans to offer strengthening amendments to his own bill which may be the Democratic consensus bill in the Energy & Commerce Committee and possibly the Homeland Security Committee.

FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The areas most in need of campaign development and funding are: 1) the state and local complements to the better developed national chemical security campaign work; 2) additional investment within both the environmental health and labor sectors on increased campaign coordination, collaboration and rapid response to strategic opportunities and; 3) the development of an active blue-green working group that engages broad participation between union locals and environmental health advocates on the chemical security issue. The following recommendations would be early strategic investments:

New Jersey Work Environment Council: For a number of reasons outlined in the report, the New Jersey Work Environment Council (NJ WEC) should be funded, particularly as

they move forward in hiring a full-time chemical security campaigner. NJ is a chemical intensive state, they have a well developed organization that in many ways is a model for a blue-green organization working on this issue, and Senator Corzine's campaign for governor will provide an excellent platform to speak to this issue in the months ahead.

Clean Water Action: To compliment the NJ work, funding campaigns in at least two or three other cities would be necessary to achieve significant political pressure with the goal of developing a collaborative effort on either a local transport issue or a production/use component of the work. Cities like Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Cleveland stand out as particularly promising from the transport perspective. Clean Water Action is a good candidate for this work. They are nationally networked and could add other cities as the issue proved resonant and successful for them. They have some history of working with organized labor in a number of their state and local offices. They are already plugged into the NJ work as they sit on the board of NJ WEC so they carry an existing organizational familiarity of the issue.

Coordination: Given the numerous arenas for potential engagement in a chemical security campaign and the current targeted focus of participating organizations efforts (legislation, transport, state efforts etc.), an investment by funders designed to increase the existing level of campaign communication and coordination would be useful within both the labor and environmental components of the campaign.

More specifically, coordinators from the labor and environmental health movements would organize potential campaign areas and organizations either currently not engaged or fully engaged in the campaign together with those groups already working on chemical security. Within organized labor, the USW is the logical and strategic choice to receive funding for a chemical security coordinator. The national environmental health collaborative known as Coming Clean and their efforts to establish model state and national chemical policies, the Amalgamated Transport Union representing railroad workers, Firefighters, and communities that have already been impacted by chemical accidents are all examples of potential key allies on chemical security that have not yet been fully integrated into the campaign.

Blue-Green Chemical Security Working Group: An investment by funders in the development of a Blue-Green Chemical Security Working Group would provide a necessary vehicle to begin a grassroots dialogue with chemical workers and environmental health advocates on the chemical security issue. Taking advantage of the inherent grassroots structure of the USW, and staffed by the Environmental Health and Labor Coordinators, the working group would focus on development of a common framing of the issue, provide a grassroots engine to drive the campaign forward, and provide a necessary forum to convene trainings and campaign collaboration.

Chemical Weapons Working Group: Another existing network model that warrants further investment is the integration of the Chemical Weapons Working Group (CWWG) into the chemical security issue. They have a well developed network familiar with the framing of chemical security along with a history of diverse partnerships and

collaboration in their work. Most notably, their recent success at preventing transport of old chemical weapons stockpiles generated significant bi-partisan support in Congress.

Below is a framework to evaluate the strategic potential of any proposed local-state chemical security initiative:

1. Does the organization have any history of blue-green collaboration?
2. Has the proposed city/state addressed or considered this issue to date? i.e.: Have they signed onto the Mayors chemical transport letter? Have they proposed state or local legislation?
3. Is the city or state a relevant constituency of any key house or senate committee vote on national chemical security legislation?
4. Has the organization identified a local chemical security threat which can be addressed through their work?

Finally, on the international level, collaboration with Sustainlabour and European unions concerned with chemicals policy in the broadest sense offers a window for influence from within the house of labor at home. This collaboration may initially purely take the form of support and institutionalization for United Nations activity assuring labor input into these civil society forms. This activity as seen in it's infancy in New York in collaboration with Cornell University has potential for raising issues with US labor unions that would not otherwise have a forum in the immediate future. They would secure as well the ability to raise the broader chemical policy issues not readily apparent when practical programming is planned on purely chemical security issues.

III. Cleaning Products

Exposure to toxic cleaning products is one of the most serious occupational risks building maintenance and janitorial workers face, but to date the primary unions representing the janitorial and lodging industry staff have not significantly integrated this issue into their campaign or organizing efforts. On the other hand, environmental organizations have done some excellent work highlighting the toxicity of cleaning products and availability of safer alternatives but their resulting campaign work has generally not involved the unions representing tens of thousands of workers nationwide.

Additionally, while many states and municipalities have environmentally driven procurement policies that provide a good basis for practical application of alternatives, they are not generally observed within private sector commercial office buildings, hospitals or the hotel industry, where unionized workers would benefit and where environmental NGOs can have market influence. A coordinated and integrated campaign on cleaning chemicals offers shared goals for unions and environmentalists for worker health and safety and safer substitution of toxic chemicals.

A 1996 study found that in the state of Washington alone, almost 300 janitors annually suffer a “lost-time” accident from exposure to cleaning products. These numbers likely represent a fraction of the actual injuries since many either go unreported or don’t result in lost time. The study also showed that workers in the healthcare and hotel settings are among those suffering a disproportionate number of accidents relative to janitorial workers in other sectors.

The Los Angeles head of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (H.E.R.E./UNITE) is interested in the potential of incorporating injury data with expertise from the environmental community on cleaning chemical impacts and their alternatives into a union campaign to educate employees about potential hazards and demand safer alternatives. Such a campaign would increase leverage in union contract negotiations and help shift large scale commercial purchasers to environmentally preferable cleaning products. On a local level it would both benefit from, and add to, existing public sector environmental procurement policies already in place in Massachusetts, Washington, Minnesota, California and elsewhere.

Nationally, many leading hotel chains and hospitals purchase cleaning products through large group purchasing organizations (GPO). A successful pilot campaign which identified products of greatest concern and available safer alternatives with Los Angeles hotel staff could eventually be woven into national strategy targeting hotel chain GPO’s. Health Care Without Harm campaigns successfully targeting GPO’s purchase of mercury and PVC containing products in the health care sector are an excellent model for this work. An eventual national campaign targeting the GPOs of large hotel chains would compliment H.E.R.E.’s pattern bargaining strategy (i.e., pursuing unified duration and content of contracts across the hotel industry). The successful implementation of such a campaign, combined with subsequent initiatives to replicate this local collaborative effort could provide critical momentum towards shifting a market that is already in flux.

In order to maximize the potential of a locally based pilot campaign with Los Angeles hotel workers, H.E.R.E. should be partnered with an environmental organization with the technical expertise to guide organizers through the maze of potential health hazards but also the commercially available alternatives to those products. Alicia Culver, co-author of several state procurement guidelines, INFORM’s *Cleaning For Health* report, and advisor to the EPA Janitorial Products Pollution Prevention Project is such a technical expert. She is nationally recognized for her work with governments and private sector interests on material substitution and would be a critical technical ally in any integrated campaign.

The Massachusetts Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health (MassCOSH) recently received funding to partner with the SEIU “Justice for Janitors” campaign on issues relating to cleaning products. This parallel effort would provide a needed east coast compliment to any H.E.R.E.-Environmental west coast pilot campaign.

The AFL-CIO- Kaiser Permanente Labor Management Partnership also provides a

unique opportunity for a safer cleaning products initiative. This Labor Management partnership, initiated in 1997 after a decade of strikes and job actions has succeeded in reducing workplace injuries by more than 20 percent.

Long time Health Care Without Harm member Catholic Health Care West, with 40 hospitals in California, Arizona and Nevada may also be interested in collaborative work on cleaning chemicals

Funding Recommendations

There are a number of occupational sectors ripe for a cleaning products campaign. These include: health care, hotels, and commercial office buildings. The setting will determine the specific targeted chemicals and union representation. Given that H.E.R.E. has already indicated an initial interest in such a campaign, the following recommendations are for a pilot campaign within the hotel industry. Funding the labor, environmental and technical expertise will be fundamental to any cleaning products campaign regardless of the occupational setting.

The development and execution of an effective, market based, hotel cleaning products campaign would require investment in the following three areas:

1. Funding support for a staff person from H.E.R.E. to organize among their membership to identify cleaning chemicals of greatest concern to workers and identify priority corporate targets. In collaboration with environmental partners and a technical expert, the H.E.R.E. organizer will design and implement a membership supported campaign.
2. Funding support for an environmental organization to collaborate with the H.E.R.E organizer and identify ways for environmental health advocates to support a H.E.R.E. cleaning chemicals campaign. The environmental partner would broaden the labor campaign to include traditional environmental health issues, campaign tactics and allies.
3. Funding support for a technical expert to assist in the identification of priority chemicals. Such assistance would include analysis of safer, cost and performance competitive alternatives, and the identification of states and municipalities that have implemented relevant environmentally preferable purchasing policies. This information would inform the design and implementation of a successful cleaning products campaign.

In addition to the Steering committee the following people were consulted in the preparation of this report:

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