Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 1, 2012

The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 3426 ARN
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Jackson:

As you are aware, over one month ago, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), following months of careful study and investigation, urged the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to remove their objections to Michigan's issuance of a permit for the Marquette County Road Commission's (Road Commission) application to build County Road 595 (CR 595).

This road has been extensively examined by MDEQ, the EPA, the Road Commission, and a number of outside groups for nearly two years. In addition, the Road Commission's application now demonstrates that the project will have a reduced impact on streams via shorter and wider stream crossings and bridges. The road footprint has been narrowed or removed across wetlands to minimize adverse environmental impacts. In fact, the proposed route has been modified in several locations to avoid critical wetlands and further reduce overall environmental impacts.

As elected representatives of the State of Michigan, we are fervently committed to preserving our state's pure air and clean water. Notwithstanding our commitment to a pure Michigan, we believe this is one instance where legitimate environmental concerns can be fully addressed even as we take steps to bring new jobs to our state. We stress that all relevant stakeholders in Michigan have articulated their support for this project and have requested that it move forward. The USEPA alone is blocking the commencement of this important project.

The addition of this road, built through private resources, will eliminate the passage of heavy fleet trucks through the City of Marquette, MI, and decrease mileage from important employment centers in northern Marquette County by approximately 80 miles roundtrip. CR 595 will reroute the fleet along a new 21.2-mile route that will completely avoid the City of Marquette, creating a road that will provide area residents access to opportunities ranging from recreation to vital emergency service access. The EPA's removal of objections to CR 595 will ensure that existing jobs stay in Michigan and will bring new jobs which are sorely needed to this region. The benefits of the addition of CR 595 will be realized by all residents and visitors to the region, allowing for more effective rural development opportunities.

On behalf of all citizens of Michigan who are impacted by this project, we urge the EPA to release its objection immediately and allow the State of Michigan to move forward with the permitting process for CR 595.

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Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my Legislative Director, Ms. Michelle Lane, at 202-225-4735.

Sincerely,