

### Grant Funding and Investigation into Tonawanda Coke Mark Needed Progress

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today applauded efforts by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce air pollution in Tonawanda calling clean air a basic right.

The EPA today announced progress in their ongoing investigation of the Tonawanda Coke Corporation that continues their goal of reducing emissions of benzene by at least two-thirds. They also announced two grants to benefit Tonawanda, \$100,000 for the Clean Air Coalition of Western New York to address the risks from multiple sources of toxic pollution in their environment and \$130,000 for the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute to promote pollution prevention.

Slaughter was originally scheduled to attend the announcement with the Clean Air Coalition and EPA before she and other House members were called back to Washington to assure that the United States would not default on national interest payments and not purposely cripple the economy.

“Clean air is a basic human right and I’m proud of my friends at the Clean Air Coalition for leading the fight on behalf of everyone in Tonawanda. I’m also very thankful to the EPA and DEC for working diligently to improve and monitor the air quality near Tonawanda Coke and in the greater Tonawanda community,” said Slaughter. “Today’s announcement of \$130,000 to the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute as I find particularly exciting because it celebrates the regional synergy developing between the needs of Tonawanda and the skill set of Western New York institutions like UB and RIT. Sadly, the battle for clean air extends beyond Tonawanda as the House majority repeatedly attempts to roll back the life-saving provisions of the Clean Air Act in Washington. Every time that happens, I think about my friends in Tonawanda.”

Slaughter has been a vocal supporter of the need to reduce air pollution in Tonawanda. In March, Slaughter wrote to the EPA supporting the pollution prevention grant saying,

“New York State Pollution Prevention Institute’s Direct Assistance Program has been able to work with various companies around the state to reduce 890,000 pounds of hazardous waste, save 841,000 kilowatt hours of electricity and save 652,000 gallons of water... NYSP2I has successfully used this tool throughout the state to assess manufacturing practices and recommend process changes that have ultimately resulted in reducing a company’s carbon footprint and saved companies money.”

A copy of her letter is included below.

Tonawanda is forced to deal with millions of pounds of toxins that are released from 53 facilities

and two major highways. A recent report found dangerous levels of benzene in the sky above Tonawanda. Benzene is a dangerous carcinogen dangerous to human health. As a result of out of control air pollution, some neighborhoods in Tonawanda have a risk of developing cancer 100 times greater than that of the New York State guideline.

### Slaughter's Letter to the EPA

March 9, 2011

Ms. Judith Enck  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 2  
290 Broadway  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Ms. Enck,

I am pleased to express my support for the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute's (NYSP2I) proposal submitted to the United State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for funding from the Source Reduction Assistance Grant Program. Located at the Rochester Institute of Technology, NYSP2I seeks to reduce pollution in New York State by providing direct assistance to companies located in the state, engaging in research and development, facilitating professional training and outreach, identifying priority sector projects and operating a community grants program.

NYSP2I's Direct Assistance Program has been able to work with various companies around the state to reduce 890,000 pounds of hazardous waste, save 841,000 kilowatt hours of electricity and save 652,000 gallons of water. NYSP2I's proposal titled "Source Reduction through Lean, Energy, and Environment in Tonawanda, NY" aims to identify companies where they can apply a sustainability tool called "Lean, Energy, and Environment" (LE2). NYSP2I has successfully used this tool throughout the state to assess manufacturing practices and recommend process changes that have ultimately resulted in reducing a company's carbon footprint and saved companies money.

Tonawanda experiences a high density of hazardous materials in the air and is home to the greatest concentration of air-regulated facilities in New York State. Work such as the project proposed by the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute is a welcome development in

Tonawanda. Once again, I am pleased to express my support for the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute's (NYSP2I) proposal submitted to the United State Environmental Protection Agency for funding from the Source Reduction Assistance Grant Program. I hope you will give their application full consideration.

Sincerely,

Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress