

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

August 31, 2006

The Honorable Stephen Johnson  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Johnson,

We write to express our strong opposition to the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) proposed Title V air quality permit amendment that would allow the International Paper Company (IP) to conduct a two-week test burn of tire derived fuel at their Ticonderoga mill.

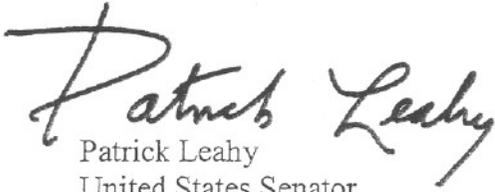
IP has acknowledged that burning tire-derived fuel may result in new or increased emissions of twenty-two air pollutants including sulfur dioxide, fine particulate matter, zinc oxide, and dioxins and other toxic air contaminants. Fine particulate matter has been linked to severe adverse respiratory effects in humans; dioxins are likely human carcinogens and are associated with adverse effects on reproduction and development, suppression of the immune system, and skin lesions; and zinc oxide and sulfur dioxide also adversely affect human health. Unfortunately IP has refused to install proper emission control equipment to eliminate these health concerns.

The NYDEC received over a thousand comments on the proposed permit, many from concerned citizens and organizations in Vermont opposed to the proposed test burn. Along with those comments, we joined Senator James Jeffords in introducing legislation aimed at protecting people who live near paper mills that burn tires from harmful air pollutants. Finally the State of Vermont is currently pursuing legal action against IP and the NYDEC. Unfortunately our concerns and the concerns of Vermonters, who live downwind of the IP smokestack, have not been heard.

The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to review the permit amendment, and the EPA has the authority to reject it. We join our colleague Senator Jeffords in urging you to protect our environment and the public's health by rejecting the permit amendment. If IP wants to burn tires it should upgrade its outdated plant with proper emission control equipment to ensure that tire burning will be safe, as has been done at other plants.

We thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent matter and appreciate your prompt response.

Sincerely,

  
Patrick Leahy  
United States Senator

  
Bernie Sanders  
Member of Congress