April 25, 2017

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
House Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee  
2205 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Vice Chair  
House Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee  
2256 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Vice Chair McCollum:

On behalf of the more than 31,000 members of the National Society of Professional Engineers, we write to you in support of the US Chemical Safety Board (CSB) and urge the subcommittee to fully fund CSB in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget despite President Trump’s recommendation to eliminate CSB. I also write to you, Vice Chair McCollum, as a resident of the great state of Minnesota.

NSPE and the professional engineers we represent rely on the agency’s independent chemical incident reports, recommendations, and safety bulletins to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Professional engineers, as a requirement of their state-issued license, must hold these three considerations paramount above all other considerations in our designs, reports, and all other areas of the practice of engineering. It is vital that this independent, non-regulatory agency exist to provide feedback on why chemical disasters arise and how to prevent these disasters from occurring again. Products that the CSB provides, including safety reports, recommendations, bulletins, and videos, are frequently used and cited by the industrial community, academia, and professional associations.

The US Chemical Safety Board was created by Congress “to investigate accidents to determine the conditions and circumstances which led up to the event and to identify the cause or causes so that similar events might be prevented.” The CSB is an independent, nonregulatory agency that investigates the root causes of chemical incidents and shares its findings broadly across industries and with the public to mitigate the occurrence of similar incidents. The CSB was instrumental in investigating the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as investigating over 130 other chemical incidents and providing nearly 800 safety recommendations, 78% of which have been closed.
NSPE greatly appreciates this opportunity to provide comment to the House Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee. We ask for your support in preserving the US Chemical Safety Board by providing full funding in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget. NSPE and the professional engineers it represents have a foremost responsibility to protect the public health, safety, and welfare—and to make others aware of ways that safety may be jeopardized.

If we can answer any questions or comments, please contact Arielle Eiser, senior manager of government relations, at aeiser@nspe.org.

Sincerely,

Kodi Jean Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE
President