



WEST VIRGINIA STATE COLLEGE

Office of the President
P.O. Box 399
Institute, West Virginia 25112
(304) 766-3111



September 20, 1995

Mr. G. Dale Farley, Director
West Virginia Office of Air Quality
1558 Washington Street, E.
Charleston, WV 25311-2599

Dear Mr. Farley:

As president of West Virginia State College, I continue to be very concerned about the safety of our 5,000 students, full- and part-time faculty and staff, and the more than 2,000 residents in the surrounding communities of Institute, West Dunbar, and Pinewood Park. I am requesting that your office officially notify my office and the Vice President for Administrative Affairs' office of all pending requests for new permits or permit modifications from the Institute-based Rhone-Poulenc AG Company, Union Carbide Chemicals and Plastics Company, FMC Corporation, and Arco Chemical Company. While some requests may be minor in nature, we would like to review them in order to assess any changes at these facilities which might affect the metropolitan Charleston and the Greater Kanawha Valley communities that we serve.

Over the past five years, I have expressed my concern over leaks and accidents in the Institute area. I have expressed my support for an independent environmental and safety audit of the plant to be monitored by a community advisory committee. On two separate occasions, West Virginia State College faculty have voiced unanimous support for such an audit, and have expressed their willingness to challenge any new permits until such an audit can be set up on an annual basis. The decision by plant managers to reject a third party audit suggests that we need to review all future permit requests carefully.

It is my understanding that your agency carefully reviews all permit applications; however, such reviews should go beyond the traditional preoccupation with secondary prevention. As an individual who has served on the Board of Directors for the National Institute of Chemical Studies since 1987, I am also concerned about the thousands of individuals who live in the Greater Kanawha Valley. I firmly believe that our long-term goal should be to reduce the possibility of a major accident, not merely the determination of "acceptable risk." To this end, we would like to see a significant decrease in the storage of toxic chemicals and the elimination of those that have the potential to threaten the well-being of those who live in our communities. We would also like to be assured

"Entering Our Second Century of Excellence"

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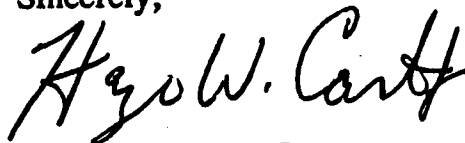
that "less hazardous" technologies have been carefully considered before any major changes in the production process are made.

There are some individuals who contend that there is little probability of an accident. The reality is that a small probability is still a probability. Despite frequent claims that accidents are unlikely, they continue to occur. During the past decade, chemical plant accidents in this country have affected local citizens and disrupted nearby communities through large-scale evacuations. History has shown that the most professional and dedicated management teams cannot guarantee the complete safety of those living in neighboring communities where the ominous threat of large-scale accidents exist. We need to remove the very possibility that an accident could destroy or gravely harm the people who live, work and study here.

Any assistance that you can provide us to help us accomplish this goal would be greatly appreciated. We stand willing and able to forge a productive, prosperous, and safe relationship with our neighbors. It is our understanding that applications for permits by area chemical plants allow for the full airing of all public concerns. As I stated before, I would like for my office to be notified in a timely fashion for all requests as they come in so that we can undertake a responsible and careful review of their potential impact upon us. We would like to be informed of all opportunities for appropriate individuals to express their concerns relative to a permit application.

I solicit your support as we endeavor to make this a safer community.

Sincerely,



Hazo W. Carter, Jr.
President

cc Dr. Eli McCoy, Director, WV Division of Environmental Protection
Mr. Hal Foss, Plant Manager, Rhone-Poulenc
Mr. Donald Moshier, Plant Manager, Union Carbide
Mr. Gary Koehler, Plant Manager, Arco Chemicals
Mr. Enrique Bertrand, Plant Manager, FMC Corporation
Mrs. Sandra Henderson, Chair, WVSC Faculty Senate
Mrs. Sally Marcus, Chair, WVSC Classified Staff Council
Miss Camille Shipman, President, WVSC Student Government Association
Dr. Cassandra Whyte, WVSC Vice President of Administrative Affairs
Dr. Paul L. Hill, President, National Institute of Chemical Studies