

Bayview Hunters Point Mothers and Fathers Committee Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice

September 2, 2020

Xavier Becerra
Attorney General
California Department of Justice
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

Re: Request for Investigation of Possible Malfeasance, Fraudulent Actions, Misuse of Public Funds by San Francisco Department of Public Health

Dear Attorney General Becerra,

We are writing on behalf of our members and constituents who are residents of Bayview Hunters Point, San Francisco, a low-income and working class community of color disproportionately and heavily impacted by many pollution sources, environmental racism and injustice.

As we are sure you are aware, the “testing” and “cleanup” of the radioactive and toxic contaminated Hunters Point Shipyard Superfund Site has been plagued with fraud and inadequate cleanup. Due to the apparent massive fraud by a federal contractor, in September 2016 the USEPA and Department of Toxic Substances Control wrote to the Navy to put a temporary halt on further transfers of land from the Superfund Site to the City and County of San Francisco until the extent of possible fraud by the federal contractor could be assessed. Due to the serious extent of the problem, the halt on land transfers continues.

Similarly, concerns have long been raised by residents and environmental justice advocates about contamination and inadequate testing and cleanup at Treasure Island, where low income people of color live in subsidized housing literally on top of and next to radioactive and toxic waste left by the US Navy.

Controversial upscale developments are planned at both the Shipyard and Treasure Island, and there has long been concern about a cozy and improper relationship between the City and the developers. A major part of the concern is that the extent of the massive contamination at both sites has literally been covered up, and the City has continually rejected calls for comprehensive testing and full cleanup of contamination.

Thanks to an in-depth investigation by the San Francisco Chronicle, startling and troubling new information has come to light, documenting extreme malfeasance and improprieties by the San Francisco Department of Public Health regarding what appears to be fraudulent testing and scanning of the Shipyard Superfund Site and Treasure Island.

The Chronicle investigation found documents proving that the SFDPH used a helicopter scan for radiation at the Hunters Point Shipyard and Treasure Island to assure the public that both sites were safe when they knew the scan wasn't sensitive enough to be used in that way.

This investigation uncovered a 2012 email from SFDPH environmental engineer Amy Brownell to two corporate development officials about the helicopter scanning, stating that it would be "extremely unlikely [the helicopter scan] will find anything because they are just doing a gamma survey at 300 feet ... if they don't find anything – it will be another layer of evidence to add to all our other information that provides assurance that the property transfers are safe."

The Chronicle report states "In the email, Brownell wrote that the helicopter's limitations were among several 'reasons to request' a flyover of the former bases."

Here is a link to the article: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Extremely-Unlikely-That-They-Will-Find-15519861.php>

We urgently request that you immediately launch a thorough investigation into this matter.

The health of Bayview Hunters Point and Treasure Island residents, some of California's most vulnerable residents, is at risk. In addition, as radioactive and toxic waste at both the Hunters Point Shipyard and Treasure Island are buried along the waterfront of San Francisco Bay, and as rising sea levels due to climate change threaten to inundate the contamination that includes residue from atomic bomb and radiological testing, the malfeasance of the SFDPH can have profound impacts on public health, safety and the environment unless action to remedy the situation is taken immediately.

We look forward to a prompt response to our request for an investigation of this matter.

For environmental health and justice,

Bradley Angel, Executive Director
Sabrina Hall, Bayview Hunters Point Community Organizer
Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice

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Co-Coordinators
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