

## epa's civil war: **join the battle!**

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*The following letters tell the story of a crisis within the Environmental Protection Agency. Maybe you can help.*

Dear Friends,

Enclosed, you will find my personal letter sent to William K. Reilly, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and a letter of request from J. William Hirzy, President of the National Federation of Federal Employees Local 2050. As you can see, we need your help.

I am contacting everyone who has been helpful to me during my personal crisis, as well as public officials. Your support will greatly benefit us all. Please, investigate this matter before it is too late.

*Sincerely,  
Xandla Amara  
Ariel & Xandla Amara  
Clouis. CA 93E12*

Hon. William K. Reilly,  
Administrator  
U. S. Environmental Protection  
Agency,  
Washington, D. C. 20460

Dear Mr. Reilly:

In February 1989 I became very ill because of chemicals in the newly manufactured carpeting which was installed in my home. After many months of frustration and futility I called the Protection Agency and spoke with Dr. Hirzy, who satisfactorily answered all my questions.

I don't have words to express my gratitude for the support and information I received about indoor air pollution and the knowledge that there were others around the country who have also been affected by carpet chemicals. This gave me the confidence to search for medical and legal assistance relating specifically to chemical exposure.

After contacting a dozen agencies to no avail, it was the Environmental Protection Agency's Workers Union (NFFE) that finally gave me the help I needed. This supportive data convinced me of the great

need for more public information about this issue.

The NFFE is an effective link between the EPA and people like me. It keeps channels of information open and clear. Without Dr. Hirzy's conscientious concern and professional expertise, my personal situation could have become much worse.

PLEASE!! In the name of all of us who have benefited, and for the sake of all those in the future who will need this point of contact — **ALLOW THE UNION TO CONTINUE IT'S PUBLIC SERVICE!!**

Sincerely,  
Xandia Amara  
National Federation of  
Federal Employees  
Local 2050

Dear Friends:

First of all let me apologize for the form letter style, but the reason for it is that I'm writing to everyone who has ever contacted Local 2050 and asked for help or information, and that's a lot of folks. The Union now needs your help to keep functioning in the manner that was able to be of assistance to you. This is not a solicitation for financial help. It is much more serious than that. The Environmental Protection Agency is trying to prevent us from responding to questions from citizens like you about our work and what that work may mean for you, your co-workers and your family. Let me explain. In the Federal Government, a union's rights are quite limited: no wage, hour or benefits bargaining, no union shop, and no strikes to defend ourselves. What Federal unions get, among other things in return for those restrictions on our rights is that we union officials continue to be paid by our agencies as though we were doing our "regular" jobs as scientists, lawyers secretaries clerks, and the like. It is called "official time" to do union work.

For the past several years, as our Union has grown in size and reputation, many citizens have con-

tacted us on a variety of matters that involve our "official time" duties. For example, after many EPA employees were sickened by an installation of new carpet in 1987-88 and news of this got around the country, we were deluged with requests for information on what happened to us and on how our problems relate to similar problems citizens and their families were having with carpet installations. Other citizens expressed concern over the way one of EPA's

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drinking water regulations was set after the Union raised the same concern as a matter of professional ethics. That is, we believe that the Agency uses science as a cover for a purely political decision on setting the standard in question, and that action damaged our reputations as scientists. Others have called us for help in understanding how EPA scientists deal with pesticide issues. There are other examples, but these are enough to give you the picture.

EPA is now trying to stop our use of "official time" for pursuing these kinds of activities and for responding to your questions about how we EPA professionals do our work. EPA is already retaliating against our Executive Board members who have led the fight for clean indoor

air and the ethical practice of science within the Agency. If EPA Administrator Reilly and Assistant Administrator Grizzle are allowed to continue on this course, we will be unable to respond to your calls for help and otherwise make known what working inside EPA is really like. We very much need you to write to Administrator Reilly and ask him why he and Mr. Grizzle are taking this action, and we need you to urge him not to continue on this course. We would like you to give him details of the interaction you have had with Local 2050. We also need you to send copies of that letter to your Senators and Representative in Congress and to ask each of them to look into the situation Mr. Reilly and Mr. Grizzle have created; this is very important.

The Union is defending its ability to continue to make our job-related work and knowledge available to the public in other ways, but your help is vital to our ability to succeed in that defense. You may write to Mr. Reilly at this address:

Hon. William K. Reilly,  
Administrator  
U. S. Environmental Protection  
Agency  
401 M Street, S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20460

If you have any questions about this matter please call the Union at 202-382-2383 between 7:30 am. and 6:30 pm. Eastern Time Monday through Friday.

If the help we were able to provide you has benefited others, we ask that you pass this letter on to them too. Thanks in advance on behalf of all those EPA Headquarters professionals working diligently in the public interest.

In Solidarity,  
Bill Hirzy, President

P.S. If you could send us a copy of your letter to Mr. Reilly, it would help our cause. Our address is: NFFE Local 2050, P.O. Box 76082, Washington, D.C. 20013.