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Ruben Diaz, JR.  
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

February 8, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott  
Deputy Mayor for Education and Community Development  
The City of New York  
Office of the Mayor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Deputy Mayor Walcott:

I am writing to express my concerns over the EPA's recent findings of PCB contamination at P.S. 68 in the Bronx. On January 29, 2011, the EPA conducted an inspection at the school examining the lighting ballasts they suspected may contain PCBs.

The test results are extremely concerning: in ten of the 13 samples taken, the EPA found levels of PCB contamination above the regulatory limit of 50 parts per million. I have listed a few of the most concerning examples below for your review and immediate attention:

- In room 111 inspectors found an oil pool with a PCB level of 920 parts per million, 18 times the regulatory limit.
- In room 307 inspectors found oil film with a PCB level of 320 parts per million, six times the regulatory limit.
- In room 308 inspectors found oil drips with a PCB level of 260 parts per million, five times the regulatory limit.

In addition, the form in which the contamination is taking place (oil pools, film and drips) leads to the possibility the toxins could be transmitted to others via clothing or other materials.

As you are aware, federal law requires the immediate safe removal and disposal of any PCB-contaminated materials at an EPA-approved facility. We are advised by the EPA that they have mandated the New York City School Construction Authority to execute a timely removal of the contaminated lighting fixtures at P.S. 68. Consequently, per this federal directive, I urge the Department of Education to arrange for the immediate clean-up of PCB contamination at P.S. 68,

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including, but not limited to, the replacement of all lighting fixtures that may contain PCBs. Additionally, the Department of Education must follow the EPA's mandate to replace all lighting fixtures in schools that may be contaminated with PCBs, regardless of testing.

Moreover, we demand the Department of Education commit to a defined schedule, approved by the EPA, to test all city public schools at risk for PCB contamination and completely remove such PCB-contaminates out of all City public schools within the next 18 months.

I look forward to your immediate attention to this matter and to discussing this with you further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruben Diaz Jr." in a cursive style.

Ruben Diaz Jr.