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**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Region 9**

**EPA Southern California Field Office**

600 Wilshire Blvd.

Suite 940

Los Angeles, CA 90017

**Subject: Urgent Concerns Regarding Hazardous Waste Sorting Site at Will Rogers Beach**

Dear Mr. Lee Zeldin,

I am writing to formally express my concerns regarding the hazardous waste sorting site currently operating at the Will Rogers Beach parking lot following the Palisades Fire. As a conservation biologist and community advocate, I find it deeply troubling that a site so close to a public beach, marine ecosystem, and residential area was selected for hazardous debris processing without adequate public consultation or transparency.

Given the potential environmental and public health risks, I request clear and immediate answers to the following questions:

**Environmental & Public Health Risks**

1. What specific hazardous materials (e.g., heavy metals, asbestos, PFAS, dioxins) are being processed at this site?
2. What measures have been implemented to prevent contamination of soil, water, and air?
3. Has an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or comprehensive risk assessment been conducted?
4. How frequently is the EPA conducting air and water quality tests, and will those results be made public?
5. What steps are in place to ensure runoff from the site does not contaminate the ocean?

**Regulatory & Site Selection Issues**

6. Under what authority was this site selected for hazardous waste sorting rather than a more appropriate industrial or remote location?
7. Has this facility been granted a hazardous waste handling permit, and does it comply with federal, state, and local regulations under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)?
8. Were alternative locations considered, and if so, why were they rejected?

9. Was the local community notified before this site was established?

#### Accountability & Oversight

10. Who is responsible for the oversight and enforcement of safety measures at this site?

11. Will the EPA commit to third-party independent testing to verify contamination levels?

12. What is the long-term plan for site decontamination and restoration once operations conclude?

#### **Mitigation Request: EPA Assistance in Beach Remediation**

If the EPA moves forward with using Will Rogers Beach parking lot as a hazardous waste sorting site, the loss of this critical public space must be offset by EPA-led environmental remediation efforts.

The soot, ash, and debris from the Palisades Fire have accumulated across our beaches, negatively impacting coastal ecosystems, marine life, and public health. Unfortunately, the City of Santa Monica lacks the specialized equipment required for a large-scale beach cleanup operation. Therefore, we will be reliant on county, state, and federal support to provide the necessary machinery, personnel, and logistical assistance to remove hazardous fire-related pollutants from our shoreline.

Given that EPA disaster response teams are equipped for environmental cleanup operations, I urge the agency to allocate resources and personnel to address this critical environmental hazard. If the Will Rogers Beach site remains operational, the EPA must offset this impact by conducting large-scale beach remediation efforts to restore our coastline to pre-fire conditions.

The community deserves transparency and scientifically sound justifications for why a public beach parking lot was deemed a suitable hazardous waste processing site. The potential for toxic exposure to residents, beachgoers, and marine life is a serious concern. I urge the EPA to reconsider the location of this operation and provide immediate public access to all environmental safety assessments conducted.

If relocation is not possible, I request a formal commitment from the EPA to assist in remediating our beaches from wildfire debris contamination.

I look forward to your prompt response and request a formal meeting to discuss these matters further. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Ashley Oelsen

Commission for Sustainability, Environmental Justice, and Environment  
City of Santa Monica