Dear Drs. Sullivan and Bamford;

Thank you for your efforts to combat Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), which have so greatly impacted our constituents. As you know, over 500,000 residents in the Toledo, Ohio area were affected this past month during a water emergency following HABs on Lake Erie, and your office played an important role in restoring an all clear status.

Recently, Congress passed the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013 (PL 113-124), which prioritizes combating harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes and freshwater bodies for the first time. Section 605 of PL 113-124 calls for an integrated assessment no later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of PL 113-124, that examines the causes, consequences, and approaches to reduce hypoxia and harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes and freshwater bodies. We were recently informed by advocates of the Great Lakes that NOAA has yet to begin implementing Section 605.

Because of the continued algal bloom crisis in Lake Erie, we ask that you prioritize efforts to implement this section. The implementation of Section 605 will help ensure that the report called for in the legislation will be submitted to Congress and the President by no later than January 1, 2016. Following the water emergencies in Toledo, Ohio and on Pelee Island, we believe this report is more important than ever so that we may work together to ensure we have a long term solution to combating HABs.

Our Great Lakes and freshwater bodies are a national treasure and extremely important to Ohio’s economy. Lake Erie alone supports over 117,000 full time jobs, and approximately 3 million Ohioans count on Lake Erie for their drinking water. Your assistance thus far with HABs is greatly appreciated. Through our continued effort we believe we can ensure the safety of our fresh water bodies, and the assessment called for in Section 605 is a significant step in that direction. We look forward to our continued partnership on this issue that is important to Ohio and the nation.

Thank you again for all your hard work.

Sincerely,

Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator

Bob Latta
Member of Congress

Rob Portman
U.S. Senator

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress
David Joyce  
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress

Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress

Jim Jordan  
Member of Congress

Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress

Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress

Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress

Marcia Fudge  
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress

Brad Wenstrup  
Member of Congress

Pat Tiberi  
Member of Congress

Michael Turner  
Member of Congress

James Renacci  
Member of Congress