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## **Letter: U.S. needs law to curb expansion of plastics industry**

Nov 16, 2021

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Sen. Joe Manchin did everything he could to cut the number of programs included in the recently passed infrastructure bill. But he made sure that one of the provisions that environmental groups rallied to stop remained in the bill. The bill makes fossil fuel companies, which contribute both to his personal wealth and his campaign coffers, eligible for at least \$25 billion in new subsidies.

At the same time, the Plastics Industry Association was a strong supporter for its inclusion of funds to prop up the recycling infrastructure and to improve participation in the recycling program. Sectors within the plastics industry also are looking forward to replacing aging lead pipe infrastructure with plastic pipes.

I place the two together as the plastics industry is the new cash cow for the petroleum industry. As you read this, there is a massive buildout of plastics-related facilities in Louisiana, Texas and in Appalachia along the Ohio River Valley. The climate impacts for the life cycle of plastics production could be more than 286 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent every year by 2025 in the U.S. alone, an amount equal to 151 coal-fired power plants or more than 62 million cars.

These facilities are clustered around communities of color and low-income communities. The Biden administration needs to take a good, hard look at the potential consequences of allowing the planned plastics buildout to continue.

I urge our local Congressmen Brian Higgins and Chris Jacobs to support these critical and common sense measures by co-sponsoring the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2021 (HR2238/SB984) which would enact a moratorium on new federal permits for plastics manufacturing.

John Szalasny

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