

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 8, 2003

The Honorable Ted Stevens
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
S-112, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Young
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-218, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Messrs. Chairman and Ranking Member:

As you prepare for the conference on the FY2003 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill, we wanted to take this opportunity to urge the Committee to support the Stabenow-Levin amendment to provide for increased inspections of municipal solid waste shipments crossing the Michigan-Canadian border.

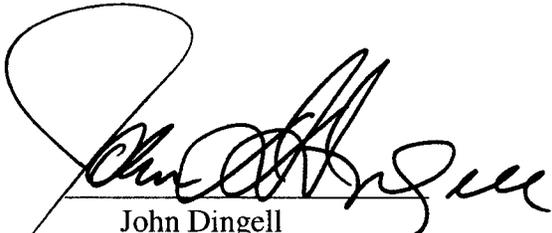
As you may know, on January 1, 2003, the City of Toronto began shipping all of its municipal solid waste – 1.1 million tons – to Michigan's landfills. As a result, 130 to 140 truckloads of waste cross into Michigan every day from Canada. These trucks cross the Blue Water Bridge and the Ambassador Bridge and travel through the busiest parts of Metro Detroit. They present a clear homeland security risk at the Michigan-Canadian border, since by their nature trucks full of waste are harder to inspect than traditional cargo. Currently, many of these trucks are being pre-cleared through these ports of entry, and are only being inspected on a random basis.

The Stabenow-Levin amendment would require the Bureau of Customs and Border Inspection (BCBP) to inspect all municipal solid waste trucks that cross the Blue Water Bridge and the Ambassador Bridge. In addition, the amendment requires the BCPB to have radiation equipment in place at these ports of entry by May 1, 2003. In these difficult times, this amendment will ensure that these municipal solid waste shipments receive the level of scrutiny they deserve to protect Michigianians and their families. We would further urge that you retain the House funding level of \$193 million for the purpose of placing radiation portal monitor devices at all ports of entry to the United States. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,


Debbie Stabenow

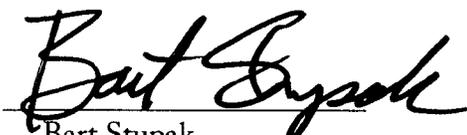

Carl Levin


John Dingell


Carolyn C. Kilpatrick


Dale Kildee


Sander Levin


Bart Stupak