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Charles Warren to Senator James O. Eastland, 10 May 1977

Charles Warren

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
722 JACKSON PLACE, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

May 10, 1977

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Honorable James O. Eastland
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

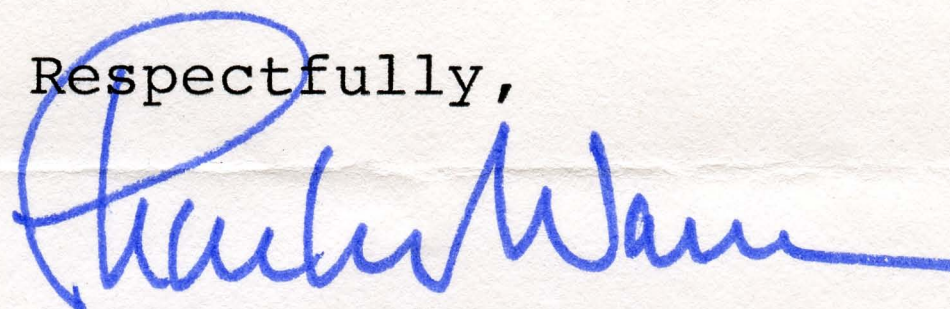
Dear Senator Eastland:

The Council on Environmental Quality is undertaking a major and public evaluation of the environmental impact statement, its need, preparation and use.

We have scheduled public hearings on June 6-8 for this purpose. A copy of the hearing announcement is enclosed for your further information. A questionnaire is being prepared for submission to industry, labor, science and technology, environmental groups and governmental agencies.

If you or any of your constituents have information or recommendations which you believe contribute to our effort, please let us know.

Respectfully,



CHARLES WARREN
Chairman

NOTICES

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT REFORM

Public Hearing

The Council on Environmental Quality will hold public hearings on how best to reform the implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), with special emphasis on the environmental impact statement process. The hearings will be held June 6-8, 1977, in Washington, D.C., at Room 2008, New Executive Office Building (located on 17th Street NW., between Pennsylvania Avenue and H Street).

BACKGROUND

The Council on Environmental Quality is responsible for the Administration of the environmental impact statement process throughout the Federal Government. The present Guidelines (last revised in 1973) are found in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations at part 1500. It is the intention of the Council to revise the Guidelines so as to reduce paperwork and concentrate on improving decision making. We wish to streamline the process without sacrificing the protection of the public's environment.

PROBLEM AREAS

We invite all interested persons to assist us in this effort. Any ideas you have we will welcome. Without limiting in any way suggestions you have, the following are problem areas which we wish to consider:

1. *Concentrating on real issues instead of paper production.* How to concentrate less on paperwork and more on substance in implementing NEPA. Include discussions of how to focus on real alternatives and on mitigation measures that offer decision makers real choices and less on bulky accumulations of background data. Make impact statements more useful.

2. *Streamlining the process.* How can project planning and the impact statement process be integrated to save time. How can statements by covering whole programs reduce the scope of needed coverage in subsequent site specific statements.

3. *Eliminating conflicts and duplication.* What can be done to reduce conflict between agencies as to which is to take the lead. How can duplication be eliminated when there are both federal and state impact statement requirements.

4. *Other problems.* Other problem areas include impartial preparation, application to legislative proposals, insuring that mitigation is carried out, the consideration of economic and social factors, and environmental impacts outside the United States caused by federal agency action.

FORMAT

The hearings will be structured as follows:

June 6: 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon—Review of impartial studies of NEPA implementation. 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.—Environmental and conservation groups.

June 7: 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.—State and local governments. 11:00 a.m.-

12:30 p.m.—Labor. 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.—Business.

June 8: 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon—Scientific and technical. 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.—Other members of the public.

It is the Council's intention to request that members of the various groupings so coordinate their testimony as to make a coherent whole and that those who testify in each half-day period insure time at the end of that half day for questions from the Council. Without limiting everybody's ability to testify at some time the Council will ask certain spokesmen to take the lead with respect to each organizational grouping. Depending on the number of people wishing to testify, we may ask that the lengths of oral presentations be limited. We welcome written presentations, whether or not people also testify. If possible, send us written statements by May 27, 1977, to allow their distribution to panel members. In any case, the hearing record will close June 15, 1977. Address all correspondence to Environmental Impact Statement Reform, Council on Environmental Quality, Executive Office of the President, 722 Jackson Place NW., Washington, D.C. 20006. If you have questions contact Nick Yost, Acting General Counsel at 202-382-6173. Thank you for helping us.

CHARLES WARREN,
Chairman.