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November 11, 2015

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

I write to express my strong opposition to the waste-to-energy incinerator proposed by Energy Answer Arcibo LLC in Arcibo, Puerto Rico.

This proposed energy project, which undermines President Obama's Clean Power Plan, will emit almost one million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere along with lead, mercury, cadmium, and other toxins and substances significantly contributing to climate change. Besides threatening the quality of air, the proposed incinerator threatens Puerto Rico's agricultural activities and would exacerbate the current drought residents are experiencing. An estimated 2.1 million gallons of water would be used per day, enough to serve over 21,000 families on the island.

To say that this incinerator will impact human health and the environment is accurate. What is inaccurate is the information used in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The date, from 2010, used to construct the EIS is outdated and gives false information regarding: population growth, waste production, recycling objectives, emissions, water sources, health, environment, and economic impacts.

The EIS does not evaluate the impact of transporting, storing or disposing of the toxic ash the incinerator would generate.

Finally, the process by which the Department of Agriculture has solicited public input from the residents of the area has been wholly inadequate. Most of the residents speak Spanish, yet there has been scant communication in their native tongue.

For these and other reasons, I strongly oppose federal funds going to or helping facilitate this project.

Sincerely,



Luis V. Gutierrez  
Member of Congress