

BOARD BIOGRAPHIES



U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board



BOARD MEMBER

Sylvia E. Johnson, Ph.D.

U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB)

Member Sylvia E. Johnson, Ph.D., was nominated by President Joseph Biden to the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board on April 29, 2021 and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on December 9, 2021. She began her post on February 3, 2022.

Dr. Johnson has more than two decades in the health and safety field. She began researching chemical exposures when she was a doctoral student at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, where her dissertation focused on the health hazards associated with children being exposed to lead in paint, dusts, and the environment.

Dr. Johnson's professional experience includes investigating industrial manufacturing accidents, hazard recognition and mitigation, and understanding the connections between government agencies and the public's health and safety. She spent five and a half years as an Occupational Epidemiologist in the Health and Safety Department for the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW). In this role she conducted workplace hazard assessments and investigated incidents involving the death of workers due to either chemical, biological, or physical exposures.

She has led health and safety investigations focused on fatal and non-fatal injuries from manufacturing equipment malfunctions. Dr. Johnson spent several years working as a legislative advocate where she worked on legislation to ensure that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration had adequate funding to carry out its mission and to live out its motto to "plan, prevent and protect." She also worked to help enact into law the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, which amended the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and gave the Environmental Protection Agency the tools necessary to ensure the safety of chemicals, as well as strengthen health protections for all workers and their families. While at UAW, she led the charge to advance legislation assisting the victims of contaminated drinking water in Flint, Michigan.

Most recently, as a legislative advocate with the National Education Association (NEA), Dr. Johnson was part of an internal health and safety team focused on the COVID-19 pandemic, with specific emphasis on educating NEA members on the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines. This required working to ensure that correct and accurate information about the vaccines was communicated to NEA members so they could make informed decisions about the vaccines for themselves and their families.