

Statement of CSB Chairman John Bresland Concerning the President's Announcement of New Nominees to the Chemical Safety Board

After two years as chairman and chief executive officer of the U.S. Chemical Safety Board, I plan to step down from that position effective upon the appointment and commissioning of a new chairman by President Obama. I will continue to serve as a board member for the duration of my five-year term, which will end in March 2013.

As many of you know, I was first appointed to the Chemical Safety Board in 2002 by President Bush. I was renominated to the board by President Bush in 2007 and, at the same time, nominated to be the chairman. I did not assume those responsibilities until March 2008, after confirmation by the Senate.

With two board member positions currently vacant and due to be filled, it seems appropriate that the new administration should also have the opportunity to select the chairman. In that spirit, I will continue in office until a new chairman is appointed.

It has been an honor to serve as chairman of the Chemical Safety Board in moving forward its important mission of saving lives through chemical accident prevention. During the past several years the Board has expanded its investigation capability and opened a very active Western Regional Office in Denver. We have conducted important safety investigations of the dust explosion at Imperial Sugar, the natural gas explosion at ConAgra, and the reactive chemical disaster at T2 Laboratories. We have worked diligently to protect and uphold the public's right-to-know about chemical hazards in West Virginia and across the country. We realized our greatest success in implementing recommendations, with the Labor Department's recent commitment to develop a new comprehensive combustible dust standard for general industry. To all those dedicated CSB staff members and Board colleagues who served alongside me during this time of challenge and progress, I owe a great debt of gratitude and thanks.

The Chemical Safety Board continues to make important recommendations in the arena of chemical process safety. I am very proud of the expertise and dedication of the Chemical Safety Board staff and board members and I look forward to continuing to work with them on a daily basis. I also look forward to fulfilling the rest of my term as a board member in full support of the new chairman.

