

United States Senate

September 28, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

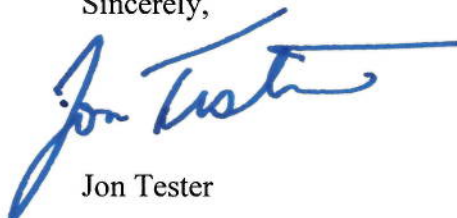
I write to you today regarding reports that your office will be spending nearly \$25,000 for a soundproof "privacy booth" in your personal office. This is a waste of taxpayer dollars, which should be put to better use in communities across Montana and this nation that are in desperate need of cleanup.

I was deeply concerned when the Administration proposed a \$326 million cut to Superfund cleanup efforts earlier this year. When you came before the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee in June, you agreed to use EPA's limited resources to improve collaboration with local communities at Superfund sites, and to push forward with sorely needed remediation and clean-up work. Just last week, the independent Office of the Inspector General highlighted EPA's continued failure to allocate its limited Superfund staff to high-priority areas, such as the West Side Soils Operable Unit in Butte. Given your verbal commitment to improving collaboration and cleanup efforts, I expect that you would be dedicating all available resources to cleaning up communities in Montana such as Butte, Libby, Anaconda and Columbia Falls, instead of wasting taxpayer money on an expensive and silly office perk that should be addressed with a simple door.

Montanans expect their public servants to be responsible and open stewards of hard-earned taxpayer resources. Given that your agency already has a secure room to discuss work with classified information, this nearly \$25,000 expense is frivolous and an embarrassment to taxpayers. Instead, these resources should be invested in local clean-up efforts. We have seen that some communities working through the Superfund process struggle to have their voices heard by the EPA. Spending a shocking amount of money on a sound-proof booth runs directly counter to your commitments of listening to and engaging with communities.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and respectfully ask that you reconsider this decision.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester