Statement

For Immediate Release
March 27, 2019
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EPA’S TROUBLED IRIS PROGRAM STILL PLAGUED BY PROBLEMS YEARS AFTER CALLS FOR REFORM

WASHINGTON (March 27, 2019) – ACC today issued the following statement after a House Science Committee hearing on EPA’s Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS):

“The IRIS program has repeatedly demonstrated an inability to meet the scientific standards necessary to produce reliable hazard assessments. There are long-standing and well documented concerns from government and non-governmental organizations regarding the program’s lack of transparency, productivity and inability to produce scientifically sound hazard assessments that meet EPA’s needs on a consistent basis.

“It is no surprise that EPA leadership took time last year to reevaluate IRIS and how it was functioning. Part of that process, according to a recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), was for the EPA program offices (e.g. Office of Air; Office of Water; Office of Solid Waste & Emergency Response) to reconfirm which ongoing chemical hazard assessments they consider as priorities for their programs.

“While we agree that some progress has been made to improve the IRIS program, there are still many recommendations that were made years ago by the National Academy of Sciences, GAO and others that have not been addressed, such as releasing a finalized IRIS handbook. IRIS program leaders have repeatedly promised but failed to deliver a completed handbook, which would detail the step-by-step guidance to selecting, evaluating and integrating evidence for developing IRIS hazard assessment values.

“We hope that the IRIS program will one day be able to produce high-quality, scientifically sound toxicity values, but it still has a great deal of work to be done to get to that point.”

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nation's economy. It is among the largest exporters in the nation, accounting for ten percent of all U.S. goods exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts, working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation’s critical infrastructure.