President Trump’s budget for the next fiscal year proposes a number of cuts, including defunding the U.S. Chemical Safety Board (USCSB). The non-partisan, independent body assesses chemical accidents—such as the West Fertilizer Co. explosion in 2013 and the Arkema plant explosion after Hurricane Harvey in 2017—and recommends better practices for the industry.

Jacinta Conrad, an Ernest J. and Barbara Henley Associate Professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering at the University of Houston, wrote an impassioned opinion piece on Forbes.com defending USCSB’s critical function.

"Defunding the USCSB is likely to hinder efforts to identify causes of chemical accidents, especially in low-regulation locales," Conrad wrote. "It is also likely to worsen our ability to respond."

Conrad added the ultimate cost could likely be human lives.

The professor, who is a 2017-2018 UH Energy Fellow, has a B.S. in Mathematics from the University of Chicago and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Physics from Harvard University.

Read the full post at https://www.forbes.com/sites/uhenergy/2018/02/14/defunding-the-chemical-safety-board-is-a-bad-idea-and-is-likely-to-increase-chemical-disasters/2/#4d7394546565

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