



House of Representatives

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October 21, 2020

Director Richard Dunn
Environmental Protection Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive SE
Suite 1456 East Tower
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
richard.dunn@dnr.ga.gov

RE: Revoke Metro Green Recycling's solid waste permit and Support DeKalb County's Solid Waste Management Plan

Dear Director Dunn,

The Environmental Protection Division has a duty to honor and uphold the law and to protect the environmental and public health of all residents of the State of Georgia. We, the DeKalb County Legislative Delegation, are angered and dismayed by EPD's decision to violate this duty and issue a solid waste permit that never should have been issued to Metro Green Recycling for a large industrial facility in the middle of a Black neighborhood in Stonecrest, Georgia, with zero regard for DeKalb County's Solid Waste Management Plan. We demand that EPD revoke that permit immediately.

It has come to our attention through our constituents, legal filings, and public records that EPD knew that Metro Green had asked DeKalb County to verify—and that DeKalb County had refused to verify—that the proposed recycling plant was consistent with the County's Solid Waste Management Plan. Then, Metro Green pandered to the City of Stonecrest, which was not a complete legal jurisdiction at the time, to sign a letter (that Metro Green wrote) falsely affirming consistency with DeKalb County's Plan. EPD knew all of this and, appallingly, still issued a permit to Metro Green.

Worse, the reason that DeKalb County determined Metro Green's facility is inconsistent with the County's Solid Waste Management Plan is because the County was trying to protect south DeKalb, which is primarily African American, from becoming a dumping ground for solid waste handling facilities once again. It is no coincidence that this facility sought out this particular location for its concrete crushing and C&D waste recycling plant. Environmental racism is a serious and long-standing problem in Georgia. Black and poor communities have suffered for far too long from polluting, noisy, and unsightly industrial and solid waste facilities that EPD has permitted to operate in their

neighborhoods. Today, we stand with our constituents who are fighting this environmental injustice and demand change.

Likewise, we fully support the DeKalb County Solid Waste Management Plan and the County officials who are trying to protect their citizens. As lawmakers, we are extremely concerned that this decision will set dangerous precedent, meaning that other companies will try to skirt around the Plan by hiding critical information and convincing other cities in DeKalb County to verify Plan consistency without consulting with the County as required by the Plan. And here, Metro Green's plant will have more adverse effects on unincorporated DeKalb residents than Stonecrest residents, as the facility is just inside Stonecrest's boundary but right across the street from hundreds of homes and apartments in unincorporated DeKalb.

We are further troubled by the fact that our constituents—both in unincorporated DeKalb and the City of Stonecrest—had no idea that a solid waste handling facility was even being considered for their neighborhoods. They received no notice, saw no signs, and cannot be faulted for not scouring the many small, local papers in DeKalb County for information. EPD must do more to verify and ensure that the people who will be affected the most by the industries it regulates have access to information.

In this situation, EPD ignored DeKalb County's direct and repeated statements that Metro Green's operation would be in violation of the County's Plan. EPD completely disregarded DeKalb County's policies and its Solid Waste Management Plan designed and intended to protect its citizens from environmental injustices.

Now, therefore, the DeKalb County Legislative Delegation hereby demands that EPD revoke the solid waste permit for Metro Green Recycling in Stonecrest and support DeKalb County's determination.

Sincerely,



Georgia State Representative, District 92

/s/state Rep. Mike Wilensky HD79, /s/Rep. Matthew Wilson HD 80, /s/Rep. Scott Holcomb HD 81, /s/Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver HD 82, /s/Rep. Becky Evans HD 83, /s/Rep. Renitta Shannon HD 84, /s/Rep. Karla Drenner HD 85, /s/Rep. Michele Henson HD 86, /s/Rep. Viola Davis HD 87, /s/Rep. Billy Mitchell HD 88, /s/Rep. Be Nguyen HD 89, /s/Rep. Dar'shun Kendrick HD 93, /s/Rep. Karen Bennett HD 94

cc: Ian Caraway, Local Government Liaison, Office of Governor Ian.Caraway@georgia.gov)
Winston A. Denmark, Fincher Denmark LLC (wdenmark@fincherdenmark.com)
Mayor Jason Lary, Sr., City of Stonecrest (JLary@stonecrestga.gov)
Matthew Welch, Deputy DeKalb County Attorney (macwelch@dekalbcountyga.gov)