

February 2, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

Burning Plastics has wreaked havoc on the health of my community. Even though the Detroit incinerator was shut down in 2019; it burned trash from cities in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Canada for over 33 years. Even after this facility has closed, my community still suffers from respiratory and heart problems that were caused by burning trash, including many plastics. These health problems persist even though the pollution has stopped. I have lost many neighbors to COVID because of their preexisting conditions that were caused by a burning waste facility near their home.

Detroit's city officials did not show interest in recycling until this trash burning facility shut down, because it was so cheap to just burn the recyclables. Plastics and other recyclable items were viewed as fuel that ultimately polluted and harmed my community in the burning process with little oversight from our state and city environmental protection agencies. In 2018, when cities like Westland, Michigan were faced with the complex problem of the China Sword and no one was purchasing their residential recycled plastics, they faced a council vote to send all of their city's recycling to burn in Detroit's Incinerator. This is happening all over the country. A city's first option for a recycling alternative should not be to burn it. We need a zero waste plan. These incinerator facilities stop the progress of implementing and improving recycling, composting, and zero waste initiatives.

Renewable energy credits need to be removed from all incinerators nation wide so that we can use these funds to support actual renewable energy efforts. Trash is not a renewable source of energy and burnt materials cannot be re-burnt. The end product of these burnt materials is a toxic ash that pollutes our air, soil, and water as it travels out of the incinerator, trucked onto highways and dumped into landfills where it is stored. The fact that incinerated waste ash is not treated as a hazardous waste in most states, is a problem in itself.

It took 33 years of environmental justice activists, community members, and environmental law centers to shutdown Detroit's Incinerator. We need political leaders to stand with us in this fight for justice and clean air in some of the most impacted communities in our country. We do not have 33 more years to do what is right. We need you to end all incineration of waste and support robust zero waste practices nationwide.

I hope this finds you all well. Take care,



KT Andresky
Campaign Organizer
Breathe Free Detroit