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[Testimony to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection \(NJ DEP\):](#)

We can move further along understanding what frontline communities need. Our democracy has a close relationship with risk and it has been challenged time and time again. First, we always need community-lead solutions. We don't want anything that's going to put money over our lives. We don't want anything that looks good on paper because the standards are already questionable to be quite honest. We don't want anything that's going to take more from us, period.

No more extraction of dirty labor from workers with just any jobs that they offer us; of culture from us with the greenwashing of methods that are supposed to keep a healthy relationship with the land; of families away from communities when we are subjected to our slow deaths because of the toxic chemicals we breathe and drink, in communities where we teach, live, pray, play, love, and grow.

You need to put value in the local power. Let community leaders organize the voices of the people. Give us enough time to gather our thoughts. Let us develop our collective needs before any decisions are made, before any decisions are made, before any new facility propose to build in overburdened communities. And yes- facilities equals newer polluting technology like gasification of sludge ([from Aries Corporation](#)).

Think about what active solidarity means. We know that the best partners are those who are committed to protecting and defending our communities from big polluters like [PVSC](#), [Covanta](#), [Darling](#), and many, many more in our ward. Not to mention the [30+ planes and 100+ trucks every hour over us, by us, all around us, that our house shakes](#). It's suffocating, there's no escape.

We are overburdened. We are OVERBURDENED.

And knowing that another facility wants to be my neighbor but they need to ask for a special permit to poison us is not okay.

We deserve to live like full people. When the laws are written down, make sure it's the strongest ones. Can we know how close we are to the facilities? Can we find a way to show that? Can we make sure they are reflective of your healthy relationship with the people who live and work here in New Jersey, especially in the EJ Communities?

Help change the material conditions that we are subjected to because they decrease the value of our lives here. Show us what you're really willing to do to protect us.

#EJDisruptDesign

#StopDumpingOnNewark

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Bio:

Patricia is the Program and Communications Associate of the EJ Movement Fellowship. She is a queer Filipina immigrant from Irvington, NJ. She is also a digital storyteller through Kapwang Tao Media LLC., in collaboration with Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC) and New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA). She has led different social media campaigns through the CompassionateNJ Coalition, #StopTheSludge Campaign and Down Bottom Farms covering housing, environmental, social, and food justice initiatives. She is a community organizer through

Allies4Justice and focuses her work doing community advocacy in Newark, NJ. Patricia has dedicated her life to art, and organizing with her community.