



MEET THE TEAM

- **DETROIT HISPANIC DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**
 - TONYA MEDLOCK
 - ELADIO NIÑO
 - LEX ZAVALA

- **UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**
 - WILLIAM LOPEZ

- **MENTORS**
 - PAUL FLEMING
 - HOAI AN PHAM

Child Support Reform

“Having my child support debt forgiven was life changing for me. I had a clean slate, a fresh start at getting my life together. I was able to hold a job and open up a bank account for direct deposit. Then I was able to build credit and get a car loan. I finally qualified for opportunities that I didn't have access to before.”

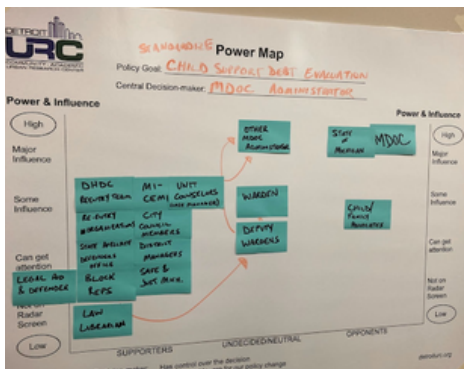
~ Eladio Niño, after being released from 17 years of incarceration debt free.

What is the Problem/Issue

Incarceration can be harmful to health, wellbeing, and family stability. One of the ways through which this happens is **the accrual of debt while incarcerated**, which can have a negative effect on financial well-being, reentry, family structure, and mental health. Debt accrual prevents accumulation of wealth and, in low-income families and communities, often forces individuals to choose between addressing health, educational, and housing needs.

The accrual of child support while incarcerated and unable to pay contributes to the debt of thousands of Michigan prisoners. In fact, the average Michigan prisoner owes about \$28,000 of back support when released.

We aimed to address the accrual of child support during incarceration by changing policy to inform all incarcerated Michiganders of the opportunity to petition their local Friend of the Court for a pause of their child support accrual.



What our Team Did/Is Doing

We identified two organizations with high power and influence who we believed would be in opposition to our proposals: the State of Michigan & the MDOC. We identified “Re-Entry Organizations” as having “Some Influence” and being supportive of our proposals. We were happy to find that we were incorrect in assuming that MDOC would oppose our proposals, and, after multiple interactions, they agreed to work with Friend of the Court on our proposal.

- While we organized our meeting among stakeholders, we engaged in educational outreach. In this case, Eladio provided a guest lecture and panel presentation to students at the School of Public Health.



We wanted to advocate for a policy with MDOC to inform all those incarcerated of the opportunity to request child care debt accrual.

After meeting with MDOC representatives, we learned:

- All prisoners get an email from JPay explaining the opportunity for abatement.
- There is Automatic child support abatement for those who entered prison after 2022

These were positive moves we were not aware of, and we had to pivot to do something new.

We met with representatives from Friend of the Court Bureau, and Michigan Department of Corrections. Communicating how to request abatement for those incarcerated is a complicated process and may require a more significant policy change than simple education materials. Other states have a Friend of the Court representative at every prison, which Michigan could implement as a policy change.

We are now set to plan a strategy session to support a Friend of the Court liaison at every prison in Michigan.

Conclusion

While this is not the policy change we had envisioned, we were relieved to find that changes had already been made to address debt accrual. Creating the opportunity for collaboration—in this case, between Friend of the Court and MDOC—was successful in moving the process forward.

Get Involved TODAY!

To Learn more, contact: info@dhdc1.org

DETROITERS WORKING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE GREEN AMENDMENT

MEET THE TEAM

- **DETROITERS WORKING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**
 - LAPRISHA DANIELS
- **UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY**
 - NICK SCHROECK
- **MENTORS**
 - RICARDO GUZMAN
 - MELISSA CREARY
 - CHRIS COOMBE

INFORMATION FOR GENERAL PUBLIC IN ENGLISH AND ESPANOL

[DWEJ-GAFTG-Post-.pdf](#)
(forthegenerations.org)

[Michigan-Palm-Cards-
Espanol.pdf](#)
(forthegenerations.org)

The DWEJ-UDM leadership team consists of Laprisha Berry Daniels, executive director of Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice and Nick Schroeck, environmental law expert and Interim Dean at University of Detroit Mercy Law. DWEJ serves on the Michigan Green Amendment Steering Committee, a statewide group focused on advancing efforts to support adding a green amendment to Michigan's constitution. The committee is advised by Maya K Von Rossum, founder of Green Amendments for the Generations - a national nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring passage of Green Amendments in every state constitution across our nation.

What is the Problem/Issue

While our Michigan Constitution has a clause to protect our environment it has not served the people well. Its emphasis is on managing environmental hazards rather than protecting us from them. The constitution recognizes and protects many important human, civil and political rights – such as our rights to free speech, freedom of religion, property rights and due process – it does not recognize and protect the inalienable rights of all the people of Michigan to a clean and healthy environment. Passage of a Michigan Green Amendment is one way to elevate our environmental rights to be legally on par with the other human, civil and political rights which are protected from government infringement.

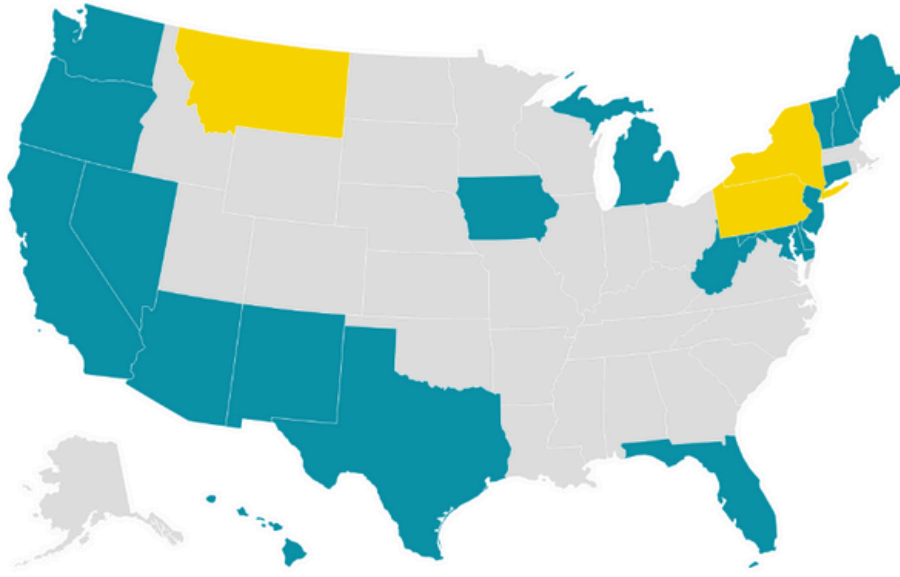
**THE BATTLE TO SAVE
OUR WATER, AIR,
CLIMATE &
ENVIRONMENT MUST
BE WON TODAY
BEFORE WE REACH
THE POINT OF NO
RETURN.**



States with approved and introduced 'green amendments'

As of 2024, 3 states – Montana, New York, and Pennsylvania – have approved green amendments. Another 19 states have introduced them.

Approved Introduced



Source: For the Generations, Sierra Club - Get the data - Download image - Created with Datawrapper



Dates and Action

4/25/2024 Green Amendment language introduced by Representative Rachel Hood

4/25/2024 referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

4/30/2024 House joint resolution filed

What our Team Did/Is Doing

DWEJ and UDM Law worked together to complete a policy analysis to determine whether fighting for a change to the constitution is the best course of action as we strive to improve the health and wellbeing of all Michiganders. After the analysis was completed, we presented results to the current Michigan Green Amendment Steering Committee and recommended pursuit of a green amendment to the constitution. The Michigan Green Amendment has been introduced and sponsored by Rep. Rachel Hood and a house joint resolution has been filed.

More Information and What You Can Do

The DWEJ and UDM team has been and continues to host virtual webinars and in-person events to raise awareness about the green amendment throughout the state.

Review the [Michigan green amendment would make clean air and water a right article](#) from PlanetDetroit.

Visit the [Michigan Green Amendment Act Now](#) website for a list of potential Actions.

Get Involved TODAY!

To Learn more, contact:

info@detroitenvironmentaljustice.org

or call 313.833.3935

Eastside Community Network (ECN)

Air Quality & Truck Traffic

The eastside of Detroit is over-burdened with multiple sources of air pollution which has a negative impact on our community's health. Through the Eastside Community Network's Eastside Climate Action Coalition (ECAC), residents are organizing around policies to address health and safety concerns posed by semi-truck traffic. The University of Michigan's Science, Technology and Public Policy (STPP) program is collaborating on this project.



OUR TEAM

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SHERITA SMITH, CINNAIR,
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The Problem

- The Stellantis Plant expansion in 2019 has brought several EGLE violations, two consent orders, and a significant increase in semitruck traffic.
 - Nearly every minute, a semi-truck drives past Clairpointe Woods subdivision on Detroit's east side.
 - Multiple trucks a minute drive next to the Conner Creek Greenway, which was re-routed due to the plant expansion.
 - Green space has been taken over to accommodate truck parking.
 - The expansion took over a vegetative buffer and a main truck route, so the residential streets are seeing more illegal truck traffic.
 - Trucks idle near the plant with no consequence.
- Air pollution created by trucks has significant negative health impacts.
- ECN's Stoudamire Wellness Hub is located in the leading Michigan zip code for asthma hospitalizations.
- There is little to no regulation or enforcement.
- Existing policies, such as the anti-idling ordinance or no-trucks signs on residential streets, are not enforced.

*This work has been supported in part by the Total Healthcare Foundation
and the Detroit Urban Research Center*

Our Policy Solution

- Organize resident leaders and build coalition across the city.
- Community-engaged air monitoring and advocacy with data.
- Engage with City Council, EGLE, and EPA around solutions.
- Pass a semi-truck ordinance that is robust, enforceable, and prioritizes community well-being.
- Create enforcement solution that incentivizes and engages residents.



What We are Doing

- Collaborating with Trucks Off Our Streets (TOOS) Coalition
 - Cumulative impacts bus tour (5/6/24)
 - Meetings with Councilmembers
- Researched trucking ordinances and enforcement best practices in other cities
- Organizing resident leaders and youth to advocate to city council through individual meetings and public comment
- Conducted town hall meeting with residents, policymakers, experts in the health impacts of pollution (4/10/24)
 - Learned about impacts and possible solutions
 - Identified concerns and solutions that residents have
- Built indoor air filters at ECAC meeting
- Researched mechanisms for truck counting and crowd-sourced reporting
- Monitoring air quality in community
 - Portable air monitor pilot with youth leaders and sustainability fellows
 - Stationary monitoring at ECN, semi-truck distribution site, and community project sites
- Educating community members about air quality issues
 - Created "Air Quality 101" and "How to engage with City Council" flyers
- Organized community conversation and postcard writing to city council event (5/8/24)

What You Can Do

- Please join the Eastside Climate Action Coalition (ECAC) at their monthly meetings. ECAC is a group of residents, city and state officials, and technical experts across Detroit committed to ensuring that local policies and programs prioritize climate justice and resilience for the community. To get involved, please contact Roshaun Harris at rharris@ecn-detroit.org.
- Sign up for the JustAir app to check the air quality in your area. Borrow portable air monitors from ECN for your project.
- Report air pollution concerns to EGLE (800-292-4706) and the City (313) 876-4715.
- Visit the Stoudamire Resilience Hub (4401 Conner St., Detroit) when the air quality is poor.



Thank you to the Bay Air Center, bayaircenter.org, for allowing us to use their wonderful infographics.

Get Involved TODAY! To Learn more, visit www.ecn-detroit.org

Fugitive Dust & Protecting Health in Detroit



What is fugitive dust?

Fugitive dust is a *mix of particles* from sources like scrapyards, unpaved industrial yards, and demolitions and construction sites. These particles are often spread by wind and trucks into neighborhoods.



How does fugitive dust affect health?

Fugitive dust in Detroit often contains harmful toxins and metals. For instance, dust from scrapyards that process metals may contain lead, cadmium, arsenic, or manganese — all which have a variety of known health effects. Concrete dust often contains high levels of particulate matter (also known as PM2.5) and silica. Both pollutants are known to harm the lungs and overall health.

When you breathe or touch fugitive dust, it can irritate your eyes, skin, throat, and lungs. Over time, it can lead to:

- Skin allergies,
- Worsened asthma & breathing issues,
- Increased risk of stroke, heart attack, & cancer, &
- Harm to the liver, pancreas, hormones, & immune response.

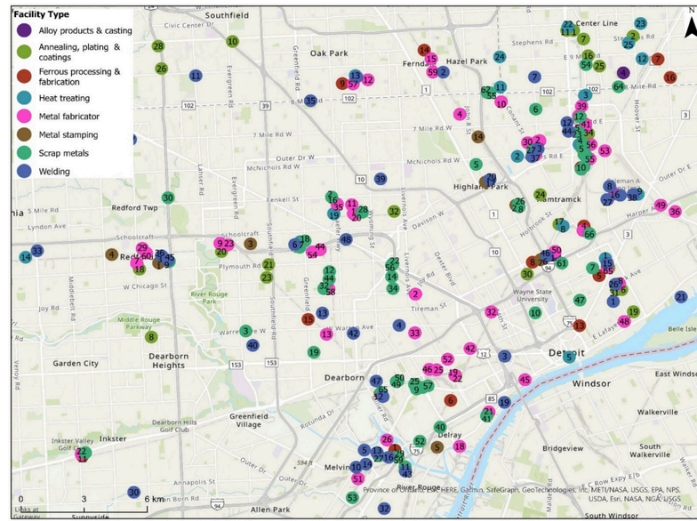
What are potential sources of fugitive dust in Detroit?

Most metal processors and metal storage, recycling and processing facilities are not included in state or federal emission inventories.

There are **271** facilities in Detroit:

- 67 scrap metal facilities,
- 60 metal fabricators,
- 48 welding firms,
- 34 annealing, plating or coating operations,
- 28 heat treating facilities,
- 18 ferrous processors/ fabricators,
- 10 metal stamping plants, &
- 6 alloy casters/producers.

Source: Gearhart, J. et al. (2023). Fugitive dust is not just windblown soil – Impact of scrap metal processing in an environmental justice community, *Environments*,10(12).



What our team did/is doing to address fugitive dust

On **January 31, 2024** we held a Residents & Researchers Webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4iK8kxBwTY>.

On **March 14, 2024** we held a community forum to share about the study and ongoing advocacy, highlighting the 250+ facilities across Detroit that contribute to fugitive dust issues that impact health. There were over 50 residents, media outlets, and city leaders in attendance at the Community Health and Social Services (CHASS) Center, Inc. in Southwest Detroit. (See attached picture) Council Member Gabriela Santiago-Romero spoke about amendments under consideration for a stronger fugitive dust ordinance in the city of Detroit.



On **May 8, 2024** we held a forum on Facebook Live w/Council Member Gabriela Santiago-Romero and experts to talk about proposed amendment.

This work has been supported in part by the Total Healthcare Foundation and the Detroit Urban Research Center

What can I do if I am concerned about fugitive dust in my neighborhood?

You can report it!

Fugitive dust and industrial piles should not be taller than their surrounding walls. If they are, you can report this to:



- City of Detroit Buildings, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department: 313-571-5115
- City Council Office: 313-224-3443
- State of Michigan - 24hr Pollution Emergency Alert System (PEAS): 1-800-292-4706
- Improve Detroit App: <https://detroitmi.gov/ImproveDetroit>
- Wayne County Road Commission, District 1 – Wyoming Yard: 313-933-4705
- Air Quality Division's Detroit Office at 313-456-4681
- Pollution Emergency Alerting System (PEAS) at 1-800-292-4706
- EGLE's On-Line Complaint Form: bit.ly/49CAnNq

You can also [contact your city council members](#) to explain your concerns so they know about environmental health issues affecting residents.



How can I advocate for stronger environmental health protections?

Current local ordinance:

Air Quality Monitoring

With the increase in public concern around air quality and a lack of data, a goal of establishing a comprehensive air quality monitoring network was set. Detroit City Council budgeted \$800,000 for air quality monitoring. Additionally, the City of Detroit applied for and was awarded an ARP federal grant for enhanced air quality monitoring through the EPA. Detroit was awarded \$481,935 for the purchase air monitoring equipment, outreach and education. The city will purchase Federal Equivalent Method (FEM) Particulate Matter (PM) 10 and 2.5 monitors with near real time reporting. These monitors will be placed around the city. The raw data from the analyzers will then be posted on a public web page. Additionally, the city will purchase equipment for the collection and analysis of airborne particulate metals and Volatile organic compounds (VOCs).



Piles of crushed concrete at Dino-Mite Crushing Recycling in Detroit.
Photo: Quinn Banks / BridgeDetroit

Proposed ordinance:

SUMMARY

This ordinance amends Chapter 8 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Building Construction and Property Maintenance*, Article XV, *Property Maintenance Code*, by amending Division 1, *Generally*, Section 8-15-4, *Definitions: C*, Section 8-15-5, *Definitions: D—F*, Section 8-15-7, *Definitions: L—O*, Section 8-15-9, *Definitions: S—Z*, and Section 8-15-11, *Civil fines for violations of this article*, and by adding Division 7, *Fugitive Dust*, to include Section 8-15-581. *Title and applicability; scope and intent*, Section 8-15-582, *Fugitive dust plan for commercial activity*, Section 8-15-583, *Opacity limits; measurement*, Section 8-15-584, *New Construction; fugitive dust plan required*, Section 8-15-585, *Change in operations, fugitive dust plan revisions*, Section 8-15-586, *Ongoing operations, fugitive dust plan revisions, other remedial actions*, Section 8-15-587, *Responsibility for dust mitigation; violations*, Section 8-15-588, *Administrative procedures*, Section 8-15-589, *High-wind events*, Section 8-15-590, *Inspections*, Section 8-15-591, *Record keeping*, Section 8-15-592, *Fugitive Dust Funding*, and Section 8-15-593, *Alternative Compliance*, to provide for the regulation, administration, and enforcement of fugitive dust emission and related inspection and reinspection of all community establishment premises and operations within the City, for the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the City of Detroit.

Show your support for increased protections. Contact your city council member and encourage them to vote...

Meet the Team:
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