

STATEMENT OF KATHRYN RAMIREZ-MERCADO

HELLO. MY NAME IS KATHRYN RAMIREZ-MERCADO. I LIVE A HALF-BLOCK AWAY FROM THE CRAWFORD POWER PLANT IN CHICAGO'S LITTLE VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD. WE'VE BEEN HERE THREE YEARS AND LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS. MY FAMILY FELT SAFE HERE.

THAT WAS UNTIL SATURDAY. ONE OF OUR NEIGHBORS, THE DEVELOPERS OF THE CRAWFORD POWER PLANT, DECIDED TO KNOCK DOWN A SMOKESTACK AND DID SO WITHOUT REGARD FOR THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF ITS NEIGHBORS. TO TAKE DOWN THIS STRUCTURE IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC WHEN PEOPLE LIKE ME HAVE ASTHMA AND OTHER RESPIRATORY ISSUES IS SO NEGLIGENT AND UNCARING.

WHEN THIS HAPPENED SATURDAY MORNING, WE SAW A HUGE DUST CLOUD APPROACH OUR HOUSE AND THEN COVER THE ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD. THAT PARTICULATE MATTER – WHATEVER IT'S MADE UP OF – IS STILL SITTING HERE. NOTHING WAS DONE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE SMOKE WAS CONTAINED ON THEIR PROPERTY. NOTHING WAS DONE TO MINIMIZE THE EFFECT OF THIS HAZARDOUS MATERIAL TO NOT FLOW TO ALL OF US SURROUNDING THIS PLANT.

I AM AMONG MANY, MANY PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHO ARE VERY UPSET THAT SOMEONE COULD BE SO NEGLIGENT, THAT SOMEONE WOULD NOT CARE ABOUT THE SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THOSE AROUND THEM. WE NEED TESTING DONE ON EXACTLY WHAT IS IN THE DUST. WE DON'T EVEN

KNOW IF WE CAN GO OUTSIDE TO GET GROCERIES OR OTHER NECESSITIES WITH ALL THAT DUST STILL ON OUR HOMES, TREES, YARDS, CARS AND EVERYTHING WE TOUCH.

I FELT THE NEED TO HIRE CLIFFORD LAW OFFICES TO HOLD THE OWNERS OF THIS PROPERTY ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE HARM THEY HAVE DONE. I WANT TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS PROBLEM SO THAT IT DOESN'T HAPPEN AGAIN. I DON'T WANT MY FAMILY AND NEIGHBORS TO FEEL THAT WE ARE HELPLESS. WE NEED TO STAND UP FOR OUR RIGHTS AND GET TO THE BOTTOM OF HOW THIS WAS ALLOWED TO HAPPEN.

THANK YOU.