



Ladies and Gentlemen of the Air Quality Control Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is [Your Name], a resident of the community impacted by the CEMEX Lyons Cement Plant. I am here to advocate for the need for immediate and consequential penalties for violations by the CEMEX plant, to move away from what effectively has become a pay-to-pollute system.

We have seen that the current penalty system lacks the immediacy and severity required to ensure compliance. Violations often go unpunished for extended periods, or the penalties imposed are insufficient deterrents against future non-compliance. This lax approach can no longer be the norm. Our community demands and deserves better.

The need for immediate corrective measures in response to violations is critical. When a violation is identified, the response should not be a financial transaction, but an immediate action to rectify the issue. We propose a system where fines are coupled with mandatory operational changes or temporary shutdowns, depending on the severity of the violation. This approach ensures that the plant takes swift and effective steps to mitigate any negative impact on our environment and health.

Furthermore, the process of identifying violations and imposing penalties must be transparent and expedient. We can no longer afford to wait 12-18 months after an inspection to learn about violations and penalties. This delay does not serve the interests of environmental protection or public health. We need a clear, enforceable system that guarantees swift compliance and immediate public disclosure of any violations.

In addition to these measures, I propose greater community involvement in the oversight and verification of corrective actions taken by CEMEX. Our community is directly affected by the plant's operations, and thus, we should have a say in how violations are managed and corrected. This could be facilitated through the formation of a community oversight committee, which would work in tandem with regulatory agencies to ensure that all corrective actions are appropriate, timely, and effective.

In closing, I urge the Commission to consider these recommendations seriously. The health and well-being of our community depend on the effective regulation of industrial activities, and it is time for a change in how we manage and penalize environmental violations. Let's work together to ensure a healthier, cleaner future for our community.

Thank you for your time and attention to this crucial matter.