

Missouri House of Representatives
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Representative:

The SB22 legislation addressing a buy out for West Lake Landfill is of paramount interest to me. I am a Florissant, MO native and unpaid advocate, representing thousands of past and present community members who are battling life threatening illnesses and cancers because of chronic exposure to low level ionizing radiation that was left over from the Manhattan Project and contaminated Coldwater Creek. This issue directly impacts my hometown, family and residents I represent.

I am primarily concerned about verbal and social media promises made by Senator Chappelle-Nadal and the Just Moms Group, that state this is "just the beginning" and that plans are underway to increase the radius of the buyout.

Ms. Chappelle-Nadal states that the reason for the buyout is related to the cancer cluster. The Senator points to the cancer cluster maps created by the Coldwater Creek group and a recent DHSS report. As one of the creators of the ongoing health survey, disease cluster maps and advisor to the DHSS report, I would like to clarify that the radiation linked illness information illustrated in the maps is not related to the landfill. The cancer/ disease cluster is specifically related to the Coldwater Creek contamination and watershed. Chronic exposure health related issues can take 10 - 20 years to present as illness. The cancer cluster that Ms. Chappell-Nadal continually references is predominantly from exposure that occurred decades ago, prior to commencement of remediation of the creek contamination. Many who have been diagnosed with radiation linked cancers near West Lake were previous residents and exposure victims of Coldwater Creek. The DHSS study considers 8 zip codes of Coldwater Creek watershed, and neighboring communities, over a 15-year period, prior to the fire commencement at West Lake Landfill, to capture chronic exposure from the creek and DNA mutations in children of former creek residents. Information can be verified at our website www.coldwatercreekfacts.com.

The Coldwater Creek group advocates for continued cleanup of the nuclear weapons waste, awareness for residents and their healthcare providers, and inclusion in the federally funded Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA), which provides restitution and access to annual health clinics for Manhattan Project contamination communities. The Coldwater Creek group vehemently opposes inclusion in a broad-based buyout of our community, as it negates the need for continued testing and remediation of the contamination and there is no guarantee that purchased homes will not be sold to other families in the future. In the case that homes are not resold, it will cause unnecessary blight and economically devastate our beloved hometown. A buyout of homes could potentially nullify the opportunity for support from RECA, even though the peak of exposure occurred decades ago. SB22 puts additional, unnecessary financial burden on the Missouri taxpayers, rather than the responsible parties.

Thank you for your consideration of my viewpoint on this matter. I believe it is a critical issue, and would like to ensure that SB22 will not include Coldwater Creek or related watershed.

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Visintine

Kimberly M. Visintine, RN, BSN, CNOR, DNP-FNP candidate
Founding Member – Coldwater Creek, Just the Facts Please
kvisintine@sbcglobal.net