

MS. BENSON: Good afternoon. How are you?

1           My name is Maxine Oliver-Benson. I'm here from  
2 the Oakland Elmhurst Blight Committee. I'm here -- first  
3 of all, because this is my first time speaking with you.  
4 I've never been here to this Committee, and I've been in  
5 the district in which I live in now 16 years.

6           I've been working with Jacquee Castain ever since  
7 I've been in that community. And I've never seen anybody  
8 from this Committee, and I've never been invited to come  
9 to this Committee. You said you came to west Oakland.  
10 And I live in east Oakland, which is blocks and blocks  
11 away from west Oakland. And we are in an environmental  
12 justice community.

13           I can start my day with 18-wheelers for 24 blocks  
14 double-parked, idling. That's the air I still breathe  
15 first thing in the morning.

16           I have a recycle center two blocks from me which  
17 at one time was spewing out blood water -- that's what I  
18 call it, because that's what it looked like.

19           Up the street from me, I had a cryogenic lab.

20           So you can tell I live in a wonderful community.  
21 And I had no one from the city or EPA coming to help me to  
22 fight any of that, until I joined the Elmhurst Blight  
23 Committee. We, the community, got together and said we  
24 are either going to live here and be safe and breathe  
25 clean air or they're going to kill us here.

1           We are homeowners. We pay our taxes. And we are  
2 here because we feel we need the money to come to our  
3 community to help us to continue to fight, to help us to  
4 continue to survive, to help us to continue to live in a  
5 safe, clean community with some sort of clean air.

6           EPA San Francisco knows me, because every time I  
7 feel the level of air gets to where I can't stand the  
8 smell or I can't go outside, I dial them. And it's, "Oh,  
9 no, Ms. Benson. Not you again." "Yes, it's me again."  
10 You know, this is the only way I'm going to get some help.  
11 This is the only way I'm going to try to survive in my  
12 community.

13           We are here because we want to see the money come  
14 to help us and not just survive but, to live. To live.  
15 And you know, I mean, I would like to see -- you can put  
16 us on your committee, and we can come and help put the new  
17 laws in the community so we can get the money to help us  
18 live and survive in our community. We just want access  
19 and the support that we need and the money to help us to  
20 live.

21           Thank you.

22           MOBILE SOURCE ENFORCEMENT BRANCH CHIEF JACOBS:  
23 Ms. Benson, I'd like to quickly respond.

24           Thank you for your wonderful comments. We do  
25 have staff assigned to the EJ project. As a matter of

1 fact, Ms. Shulz is here, and she'd be happy to talk to you  
2 in the back of the room or in the foyer.

3           We are involved in the toxic tours with the  
4 Department of Toxic Substances Control. I personally have  
5 met with Jacquee. I was down there for a workshop that  
6 was held on a Saturday back in May, and Michelle and  
7 others were actually on the tour. So we're very aware of  
8 the issues. We're working with your community to address  
9 these concerns.

10           And what we would like for you to do is to bring  
11 the message back to your community to please report these  
12 violations to those hotlines that I provided. And  
13 Michelle can provide additional information. And we will  
14 continue to look into these issues and take swift and  
15 corrective enforcement action, because these vehicles  
16 cannot idle more than five minutes under state law. And  
17 if there is some issues with some of these stationary  
18 sources that you point out, we'll work closely with the  
19 air district there and have those folks address those  
20 concerns.

21           But thank you for coming and providing the  
22 comments .

23           MS. BENSON: Okay.

24           MOBILE SOURCE ENFORCEMENT BRANCH CHIEF JACOBS:  
25 And Ms. Shulz is back here. If you can raise your hand,

1 Michelle. She would be more than happy to tell you in  
2 great detail the work she's been doing. She's very  
3 dedicated to this activity. Thank you.

4 MS. BENSON: Yes, we met her. I don't remember  
5 seeing you, because I was on the tour as well as the  
6 Senator. Yes, we met her. And she is the reason that  
7 there are no longer idling, because she got on it and took  
8 care of it. But it took us getting with her and with DTSC  
9 and a couple of other people from DTSC, which had been  
10 taking us years to do.

11 So, yes, I applaud her, because she did -- she  
12 took care of it. Every once in a while now I see one or  
13 two. But she did her job.

14 And that's what we want. We want the money to  
15 come to help us to live in that community. Not just  
16 survive, but live. Thank you.