

April 2, 2019

St. John the Baptist Parish Council
1805 West Airline Highway
LaPlace, La 70068

Via: Facsimile to (985) 652-1700 and E-mail

Dear Councilmembers,

We understand that tonight the Council will be voting on permit approval for a march for environmental safety, scheduled for April 4. We urge you to approve the permit.

The ability of people to protest and speak out on matters of public concern is at the core of our protected constitutional rights. We are concerned that the Parish's advance notice and permitting requirements place an unconstitutional burden on the exercise of constitutional rights and violate the First Amendment.

We urge the Council to approve the permit. We also hope that the Council will consider amending its permitting process to comply with the First Amendment and eliminate the current illegal prior restraint process. I am available to talk further with the Parish attorney about our constitutionality concerns if that would be helpful. In the short term, it is critically important that the people seeking to protest the harms visited on their communities are able to speak out this week.

Sincerely,

Katie Schwartzmann
Legal Director

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