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Denise Gordon

The purpose of my submission is to pose 2 questions. But first I'd like to express how I'm feeling.

Like most people here, I'm angry, I'm frightened, but the most overwhelming feeling I have is one of immense betrayal. I've always felt that the government and the rules and regulations that they have in place, whilst sometimes annoying, are there to keep us safe. I thought that we had bodies and organisations in Australia, unlike many third world countries, which monitored the dangers to our health, including what we breathe in.

The evidence about plastic recycling factories being detrimental to human health and the environment is indisputable in its volume and accuracy due to the massive amount of research that has been carried out. An uncountable number of studies have been done. Therefore it seems almost criminal and certainly unforgivable that this one – the largest plastics factory in Australia, (by almost double the current biggest) should be built in its current suggested location. That the process of approval has got to this point has made me lose complete faith in government and their system of regulations.

So now allow me to set up my first question.

Erin Brockavich was in NSW last week to lend her weight to the largest class action there has ever been in Australia. 40,000 people suing the government because they live and work on land contaminated by the chemical compound PFAS, not only is their health affected but they are unable to sell their homes and move away from an environment that is poisoning them. This will cost the government millions in compensation

If this factory goes ahead in its current location, then when we are breathing in the carcinogenic fumes from 4, 22 metre high smoke stacks, when our gardens are covered in microplastics and anything we grow to eat is compromised, when the tourists stop coming and the jobs are lost and we can't sell our homes, when the cancer rates increase, the infertility and autism numbers are infinitely higher than that of a healthy population, when lung diseases become commonplace, then the compensation lawyers will start circling around this community and the class action I've just described will look like small fry at the side of the SH class action.

Over the next 2 days, you are going to hear about the health cost to community, you will hear about the cost to the water supply that will affect greater Sydney, you will hear about the cost to flora and fauna and the wonderful agricultural industries that flourish here. But what about the financial cost of the litigation that will be brought to bear, because tests will be done a year or so down the track and the suing will start. The costs (as shown in the Brockavich case) will run into the hundreds of millions if not billions – so my question is this - will this factory in its ridiculously stupid location be worth the massive future costs to the government and the tax payers?

That's my first question and I'll leave it there for consideration.

My second question to you requires more of a heartfelt response.

I'm going to read you an extract from an article, the link to which is on this paper which I will hand it later.

"Scientific studies have found that localized air pollution and the release of toxins during plastic shredding and melting pose risks to human health. These include exposure to fine particles, dioxins, volatile organic compounds, and other harmful chemical additives in plastics and have been linked to asthma, respiratory illnesses, cancer and reproductive system harms."

Keeping that fresh in your mind, I live 200 m as the crow flies from this proposed factory. I will be directly looking at the 4, 22 m high smoke stacks and the carcinogens they will be emitting 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I will be quite lonely because I will not be letting my children, and grandchildren come to visit and by the way, children are particularly in danger from the toxic dust and fumes emitted from these factories, as are the elderly! I have relatives and friends that come to visit me but I will no longer feel comfortable inviting them into my toxic environment. So my question is to you – if this goes ahead, will you come and sit with me for a few hours on my front porch? I'll pick you some raspberries from my microplastic coated garden, and we can drink water from the Wingecarribee River which the waste water from the factory flows into, but mostly we can just sit and breathe in the polluted air from those smoke stacks. You'll be taking those deep toxic breaths for a couple of hours – but I'll be breathing it in 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for the rest of my life.

How about it? Will you come and visit with me?

Because the thing is, if you say NO to me, then how, in good conscience, can you say YES to Plasrefine?

THIS IS NOT THE RIGHT SITE!