

**OP-ED
FROM IRONBOUND COMMUNITY CORPORATION:**

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Ironbound Is Not a “Sacrifice Zone”

Doremus Avenue in Newark has long been known by a darker name: “*Chemical Corridor*”. Industrial facilities, warehouses, waste processing plants, and power infrastructure line the street and stand as a reminder of New Jersey’s legacy of environmental racism. For decades, this stretch of land has shouldered the weight of the state’s industrial growth, but at a devastating cost to nearby residents.

The Ironbound is one of the most heavily polluted zip codes in New Jersey. It bears the brunt of much of the pollution in Newark. This is the daily reality for thousands of families who breathe in dirty air, drink contaminated water, and live in constant proximity to toxic exposure. Our community is forced to contend with sky-high asthma rates, rampant respiratory issues, and chronic health conditions that cut lives short.

It’s well established that communities near fossil fuel infrastructure and industrial zones face significantly worse health outcomes than those who don’t. Pollution from these facilities doesn’t just dirty the air—it invades lungs, accelerates disease, and steals years off of lives. Ironbound residents are living proof of this grim equation. Despite all they’ve survived and continue to endure, the state has the audacity to consider allowing yet another fossil-fuel power plant in this neighborhood.

Communities of Color, like those found in the Ironbound, are disproportionately targeted for pollution-intensive infrastructure for a myriad of reasons, including discriminatory zoning laws, political disenfranchisement, and lack of economic resources. This is a textbook example of environmental injustice.

Even more troubling is the sheer contradiction of placing this project in a community already burdened by environmental harm and on the front lines of climate impacts. From flooding and extreme heat to toxic air, the people of Ironbound are already feeling the climate crisis firsthand. Asking them to bear *more* pollution is not just indefensible, it’s immoral.

It is time for the Board of Commissioners and NJDEP to reject this proposal outright. At the upcoming Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) meeting on May 15th, commissioners could vote to approve a FOURTH gas plant in Newark’s already overburdened Ironbound neighborhood.

They may think that residents of the Ironbound do not have a voice, but they couldn't be more wrong. Ironbound is organizing, and its residents are demanding better.

Over 1,000 letters have been sent to the Board of Commissioners, demanding a halt to the project. Ironbound residents, environmental justice groups, and allies have come together in powerful grassroots organizing. The Newark City Council passed a unanimous resolution opposing the plant. Mayor Ras Baraka, U.S. Senator Andy Kim, New Jersey Senator M. Teresa Ruiz, East Ward Councilman Michael Silva, Essex County Executive Joe DiVincenzo, and other elected officials have added their voices to the chorus.

The message could not be clearer: Ironbound says "No." Newark says "No." New Jersey must listen.

Governor Phil Murphy signed the strongest environmental justice law in the country. Why isn't it being applied now in Newark? Do Newark lives matter?

ACTION:

- Text Governor Murphy at 732-605-5455
 - "NO" on PVSC gas plant
 - Protect the Ironbound
 - Newark's kids need you
 - *Include your name, town, and affiliation (e.g., community, faith, or climate group).*
- **PVSC VOTE - join the call!**
This Thursday, May 15, 2025
12:00 Noon

ZOOM LINK FOR MEETING:

<https://pvsc.zoom.us/j/87219750682?pwd=rJw7E33zuh6DFxx39FPwR6xdAV9kKi.1>